

Aitkin County Board of Commissioners  
Request for County Board Action/Agenda Item Cover Sheet



To: Chairperson, Aitkin County Board of Commissioners Date: 10-2-13

Via: Patrick Wussow, County Administrator

From: Patrick Wussow, County Administrator

Title of Item:

MN DNR Request to Acquire Additional 762 Acres of Land in Fleming Township to Enlarge Gun Lake State Wildlife Management Area

Requested Meeting Date: 10-8-13 Estimated Presentation Time: 1 hour

Presenter: Patrick Wussow, County Administrator

**Type of Action Requested** (check all that apply)

- For info only, no action requested
- For discussion with possible action
- Let/Award Bid or Quote (attach copy of basic bid/quote specs or summary of complex specs, each bid/quote received & bid/quote comparison)
- Approve/adopt proposal by motion
- Authorize filling vacant staff position
- Request to schedule public hearing or sale
- Request by member of the public to be heard
- Item should be addressed in closed session under MN Statute \_\_\_\_\_
- Approve under Consent Agenda
- Adopt Ordinance Revision
- Approve/adopt proposal by resolution (attach draft resolution)
- Other (please list) \_\_\_\_\_

**Fiscal Impact** (check all that apply)

- Is this item in the current approved budget? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ (attach explanation)
- What type of expenditure is this?  Operating  Capital  Other (attach explanation)
- Revenue line account # that funds this item is: \_\_\_\_\_
- Expenditure line account # for this item is: \_\_\_\_\_

**Staffing Impact** (Any yes answer requires a review by Human Resources Manager before going to the board)

- Duties of a department employee(s) may be materially affected.  Yes  No
- Applicable job description(s) may require revision.  Yes  No
- Item may impact a bargaining unit agreement or county work policy.  Yes  No
- Item may change the department's authorized staffing level.  Yes  No



**Supporting Attachment(s)**

- Memorandum Summary of Item
- Copy of applicable county policy and/or ordinance (excerpts acceptable)
- Copy of applicable state/federal statute/regulation (excerpts acceptable)
- Copy of applicable contract and/or agreement
- Original bid spec or quote request (excluding complex construction projects)
- Bids/quotes received (excluding complex construction projects, provide comparison worksheet)
- Bid/quote comparison worksheet
- Draft County Board resolution
- Plat approval check-list and supporting documents
- Copy of previous minutes related to this issue
- Other supporting document(s) (please list) \_\_\_\_\_

**Provide (1) copy of supporting documentation NO LATER THAN Wednesday at Noon to make the Board's agenda for the following Tuesday. (If your packet contains colored copies, please provide (4) paper copies of supporting documentation as we do not have a color printer or copier.) Items WILL NOT be placed on the Board agenda unless complete documentation is provided for the Board packets.**

# AITKIN COUNTY ADMINISTRATION

**Aitkin County Courthouse**  
217 Second Street N.W. Room 130  
Aitkin, MN 56431  
218-927-7276  
Fax: 218-927-7374

**TO: Aitkin County Board of Commissioners**

**FROM: Patrick Wussow, Aitkin County Administrator**

**RE: DNR Proposed Land Acquisition of 762 Acres**

**DATE: October 1, 2013**

This is the follow up discussion to the DNR's request to acquire 762 acres in Fleming Township. To address the questions raised by the County Board staff has attached numerous exhibits.

At the August 27<sup>th</sup> Board meeting, Board members had several questions that they asked for responses. Jim Ratz, County Attorney has provided those responses, which are not public at this time (separate attachment). Included with the exhibits you will find the language which identifies that an appraisal was required and that DNR staff were to review the appraisal to verify that the proposed purchase meets statutory requirements. At this time the MN DNR is not providing a copy of the appraisal to Aitkin County. Additional questions from the Board related to the existence of a Wildlife Management Plan for Gun Lake and a copy is provided. Also, the Board asked where the funding was coming from for the Gun Lake Wildlife Management Area and an email response from David Kanz is included in the exhibits.

Other related questions from Commissioners related to the original purchase of the Carlson Property. To provide additional background staff is providing the following. The Carlson (80 acres) property, when it was acquired in 2008 by the MNDNR for the Gun Lake Wildlife Management Area was valued at \$70,100. At sale it was acquired for \$80,000, or about 14% over the appraised value. Currently the Carlson property brings in \$600 of Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILT). In 2008, it had previously paid \$150 in taxes per year. It should be noted that the current value of the property is \$103,700 as determined by the County Assessor, which would raise that PILT payment to \$778 annually.

Finally, the County Board asked staff to provide possible reasons for denial. Possible reasons for denial include:

1. The fact that the requested appraisal was not provided by the private landowner, MN DNR, or another involved party is withholding information that is necessary in the decision-making process.
2. The County Board could determine that the MN DNR is not following their own Management plan or that the plan is not specific enough for the County Commissioner to determine that this acquisition will meet the MN DNR objective.
3. Possible lack of funding to operate the ongoing management for the Gun Lake Wildlife Management Area.

The County Board has the responsibility under MN Statute 97A.145 to approve or deny this request within 90 days of receipt of the request. The Initial application was received from the MN DNR on August 6<sup>th</sup> (Attached email from Aitkin County staff to MN DNR), that gives Aitkin County until November 4<sup>th</sup> to make a decision.

The Board will need to determine if they are in favor of this project.

If you have questions, please contact me.

#### Exhibits

- A. August 27, 2013 Board Packet
- B. August 20, 2013 SWCD comments
- C. Curtis Sparks' (Representative Thompson) comments
- D. Wetland comments, Becky Sovde, Wetland Specialist/Compliance Officer Aitkin County
- E. Gun Lake WMA Management Guidance Document
- F. David Kanz, MN DNR, responses to questions from Aitkin County staff
- G. Summary of Thompson Property's 762 acre current valuation
- H. Handout from September 24, 2013 County Board meeting
- I. Lessard-Sam Outdoor Heritage Council Funding 2014-2015
- J. Bill Becker, Lessard-Sam's Executive Director comments



**Aitkin County Board of Commissioners**  
**Request for County Board Action/Agenda Item Cover Sheet**



To: Chairperson, Aitkin County Board of Commissioners      Date: 8-21-13

Via: Patrick Wussow, County Administrator

From: Patrick Wussow, County Administrator

Title of Item:

MN DNR Request to Acquire Property

Requested Meeting Date: 8-27-13      Estimated Presentation Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Presenter: Patrick Wussow, County Administrator

**Type of Action Requested** (check all that apply)

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> For info only, no action requested  | <input type="checkbox"/> Approve under Consent Agenda                                   |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> For discussion with possible action  | <input type="checkbox"/> Adopt Ordinance Revision                                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Let/Award Bid or Quote (attach copy of basic bid/quote specs or summary of complex specs, each bid/quote received & bid/quote comparison) | <input type="checkbox"/> Approve/adopt proposal by resolution (attach draft resolution) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Approve/adopt proposal by motion  | <input type="checkbox"/> Authorize filling vacant staff position                        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Request to schedule public hearing or sale  | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please list) _____                                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Request by member of the public to be heard   |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Item should be addressed in closed session under MN Statute _____   |   |

**Fiscal Impact** (check all that apply)

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- Applicable job description(s) may require revision.  Yes  No
- Item may impact a bargaining unit agreement or county work policy.  Yes  No
- Item may change the department's authorized staffing level.  Yes  No



**Supporting Attachment(s)**

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- Other supporting document(s) (please list) \_\_\_\_\_

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217 Second Street N.W. Room 130  
Aitkin, MN 56431  
218-927-7276  
Fax: 218-927-7374

**TO: Aitkin County Board of Commissioners**

**FROM: Patrick Wussow, Aitkin County Administrator**

**RE: MN DNR Request to Acquire an Additional 762 Acres of Land in Fleming Township to Enlarge Gun Lake State Wildlife Management Area**

**DATE: August 21, 2013**

Please review the attached letter from the Department of Natural Resources which in summary requests that the County Board "approve or disapprove the proposed acquisition" in Fleming Township. The parcel that the MN DNR is proposing to acquire is 762 acres of land in Section 4 and 5 of Fleming Township. Pheasants Forever, Inc. will be buying the land and in turn sell it to the MN DNR.

Staff has contacted Dave Kanz, MN DNR Acting Area Wildlife Supervisor and asked that he clarify if the DNR is required to follow MN Statute 97A.145 or if they are creating a "good working relationship" as their letter of August 6, 2013 is unclear if the DNR in this situation is required to have County Board approval or disapproval. We have been informed that additional information will be provided before and at the meeting with the County Board.

Mn Statutes 97A.145 (attached) identifies that the Aitkin County SWCD is to advise the County Board "on drainage and flood control and the best utilization and capability of the land." The SWCD discussed the issue at their August 20<sup>th</sup> Board meeting, a copy of their comments is attached.

Staff attended the Fleming Township Board meeting on August 14<sup>th</sup> when the Supervisors discussed the issue. Their official position is that they are neutral as they understand the issues and realize that they have no official authority.

Finally, staff is attaching a 2013 Field Progress report that relates to sharp-tail grouse and was discussed at the Fleming Township meeting. Emails are also included relating to the purchase price of the land and possible PILT payments.

The Board will need to determine if they are in favor of this project.

If you have questions, please contact me.

August 6, 2013

Aitkin County Commissioners  
217 2nd St NW  
Aitkin, MN 56431

Dear Commissioners,

Mr. Dennis Thompson and Mr. Timothy Thompson (Thompson Farms) have informed us of their desire to sell 762 acres of land in Sections 4 and 5 of Fleming Township to Pheasants Forever, Inc (see attached). Subsequently, Pheasants Forever, Inc. will then sell the subject property to the MN Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Section of Wildlife to become a part of the Gun Lake State Wildlife Management Area (WMA). We hope to acquire this property because it meets our criteria for development of a quality WMA and has, we believe, public support in the Aitkin County community.

In an effort to build on the good working relationship that the DNR has with county governments throughout the State, the DNR will be notifying county governments on all pending donations and acquisitions of land or easements for WMA purposes. For lands purchased by the DNR for WMA purposes, we will continue the requirement under Minnesota Statutes 97A.145 to obtain county board approval. As with all of our WMAs, this new addition will fall under the "in-lieu-of-tax" county tax payment schedule. With your approval, we are hopeful to add this land to our WMA system.

Acquiring this parcel will allow DNR to manage the Gun Lake WMA for the benefit of sharp-tailed grouse, ring-necked pheasants, turkey, and deer, while providing additional hunting, trapping, and wildlife viewing opportunities for the general public and Aitkin County residents.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me. Pheasants Forever and I will be in attendance at your next board meeting. We look forward to discussing this opportunity with you. Thank you for allowing us time on your agenda.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Dave Kanz".

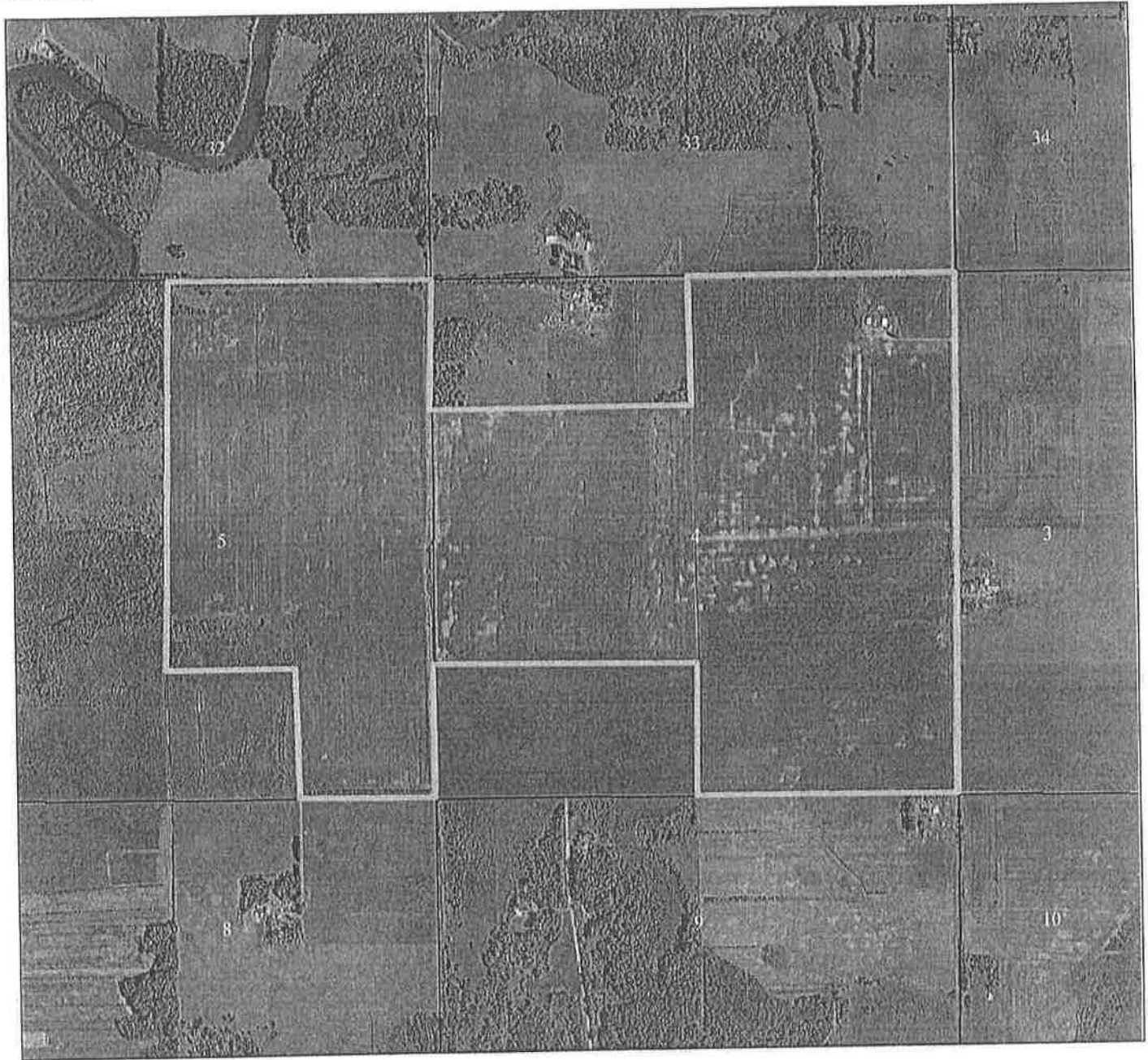
Dave Kanz, MN DNR Acting Area Wildlife Supervisor  
218-927-6915

cc: Jeff Lightfoot— MN DNR Regional Wildlife Manager  
Kim Hennings—MN DNR Wildlife Land Acquisition Coordinator  
Joe Pavelko – PF MN Director of Conservation

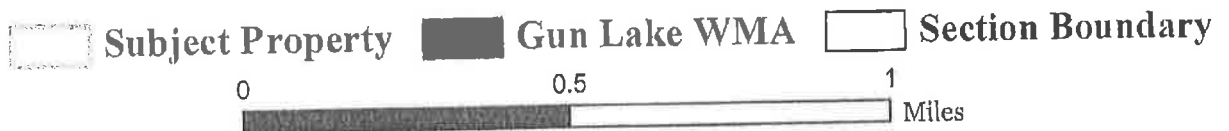
# Northeastern Minnesota Sharp-tailed Grouse Habitat Partnership



## Gun Lake WMA Addition 760 Acres



### Fleming Township, Aitkin County, MN



## 2012 Minnesota Statutes

### 97A.145 WETLANDS FOR WILDLIFE.

Subdivision 1. **Acquisition; generally.** (a) The commissioner or the commissioner of administration may acquire wetlands and bordering areas, including marshes, ponds, small lakes, and stream bottoms for water conservation relating to wildlife development. The lands that are acquired may be developed for wildlife, recreation, and public hunting. The wetlands may be acquired by gift, lease, purchase, or exchange of state lands.

(b) The commissioner may also acquire land owned by the state and tax-forfeited land that is suitable for wildlife development. The wetlands may not be acquired unless public access by right-of-way or easement from a public road is also acquired or available. In acquiring wetlands under this section the commissioner shall assign highest priority to type 3 and 4 wetlands, as defined in United States Fish and Wildlife Service Circular No. 39 (1971 edition), that are public waters. Lands purchased or leased under this section may not be used to produce crops unless needed for wildlife. The commissioner may designate, by written order published in the State Register, land acquired under this section as a wildlife management area for purposes of the outdoor recreation system. Designations of wildlife management areas are exempt from the rulemaking provisions of chapter 14 and section 14.386 does not apply.

Subd. 2. **Acquisition procedure.** (a) Lands purchased or leased under this section must be acquired in accordance with this subdivision.

(b) The commissioner must notify the county board and the town officers where the land is located and furnish them a description of the land to be acquired. The county board must approve or disapprove the proposed acquisition within 90 days after being notified. The commissioner may extend the time up to 30 days. The soil and water conservation district supervisors shall counsel the county board on drainage and flood control and the best utilization and capability of the land.

(c) If the county board approves the acquisition within the prescribed time, the commissioner may acquire the land.

(d) If the county board disapproves the acquisition, it must state valid reasons. The commissioner may not purchase or lease the land if the county board disapproves the acquisition and states its reasons within the prescribed time period. The landowner or the commissioner may appeal the disapproval to the district court having jurisdiction where the land is located.

(e) The commissioner or the owner of the land may submit the proposed acquisition to the Land Exchange Board if: (1) the county board does not give reason for disapproval, or does not approve or disapprove the acquisition within the prescribed time period; or (2) the court finds that the disapproval is arbitrary and capricious, or that the reasons stated for disapproval are invalid.

(f) The Land Exchange Board must conduct a hearing and make a decision on the acquisition within 60 days after receiving the proposal. The Land Exchange Board must give notice of the hearing to the county board, the commissioner, the landowner, and other interested parties. The Land Exchange Board must consider the interests of the county, the state, and the landowner in determining whether the acquisition is in the public interest. If a majority of the Land Exchange Board members approves the acquisition, the commissioner may acquire the land. If a majority disapproves, the commissioner may not purchase or lease the land.

Subd. 3. **Management.** If a drainage outlet is petitioned and drainage proceedings are conducted under the Drainage Code, chapter 103E, the commissioner should not interfere with or unnecessarily delay the proceedings.

**History:** 1986 c 386 art 1 s 28; 1990 c 391 art 10 s 3; 2004 c 221 s 40



## **Habitat selection, nest success, and survival of female sharp-tailed grouse in relation to management of open landscapes in Minnesota**

Primary Investigator:  
Lindsey M. Shartell, Ph.D.  
Forest Habitat Assessment Biologist  
Forest Wildlife Habitat Team  
MN DNR Division of Fish and Wildlife

### **2013 FIELD SEASON PROGRESS REPORT** August 19, 2013

During the spring of 2013, sharp-tailed grouse were trapped at five lek sites within the east-central sharptail range (Figure 1). Sharp-tailed grouse were captured using walk-in funnel traps and drift fences placed across the center of active lek sites. Traps were monitored beginning in late March when males were observed displaying at lek sites, however lek attendance by females (hens) occurred later than expected, peaking in early May. A total of 19 hens were trapped and radio-collared at sites in Aitkin (3 leks, 14 hens) and St. Louis (2 leks, 5 hens) counties from 1 May through 13 May 2013. In addition, one male was radio-collared at each lek site. All radio-collared sharptails were fitted with necklace style radio transmitters (ATS Model A3960) equipped with a 12-hour mortality sensor. Radio-collared grouse were located at minimum two times per week using truck mounted omni-directional antennas (ATS) and hand-held 2-element antennas (Telonics RA-23K) in combination with portable receivers (ATS R2000).

Throughout the breeding season, a total of 408 locations were obtained for 19 hen and 5 male radio-collared grouse. From 19 radio-collared hens, we were able to locate 17 first nests and 2 second nests. Nests were likely initiated by all hens in the study, however first nests were not able to be located for two hens, one of which was suspected to have initiated a nest that was lost in a prescribed fire on 24 May 2013. This hen initiated a second nest, as did one other hen that lost her first nest to depredation.

Of 19 total nest attempts, 14 successfully hatched at least one egg (74% nest success). The remaining five nests were lost to depredation, four of which were determined to be mammalian. Clutch size ranged from 10 to 13 eggs, with a mean clutch size of 11.3 (n=12 nests). Mean hatch for successful nests was 8.8 eggs, and ranged from 1 to 13 successfully hatched eggs.

Hen survival during the nesting period was high, with no hen mortality occurring prior to nest depredation or hatch. Two hens died during the potential re-nesting period following nest depredation. Following hatch brood survival was low, with only 4 broods (29% of successful nests) remaining at 30 days post-hatch, and only 3 broods (21% of successful nests) remaining at 50 days post-hatch. Hen mortality likely contributed to this, with 6 hens dying while actively brood rearing. Of the three remaining broods, all are at Gun Lake, and brood size ranges from 2 to 7, with a total of 13 juveniles observed. Mortality during the brooding period (approximately 1 July – 15 August) was high for all hens, with a mortality rate of 67% for hens with broods (n=9 hens) and 50% for hens that were unsuccessful nesting or previously lost broods (n=8 hens). Thus hen survival across the entire breeding season was 37% (63% mortality). Male survival over this same period was 80% (20% mortality, n=5 males). Cause of mortality was identified in

3 cases as avian and in 2 cases as mammalian predation. Differences in success and survival rates were observed among study sites (Table 1), however this data will require further analysis.

Habitat assessment plots were measured at nest sites, random non-nest sites, and brood rearing sites. Management history surrounding lek sites is currently being compiled. Analysis of habitat and management data will take place following a second season of trapping and tracking in 2014.

Table 1. Comparison of success and survival rates at study sites.

Study Site	Nest Success	Brood Success	Hen Survival
Sax (n=3)	100%	0%	0%
Simek (n=2)	100%	0%	50%
Rono (n=4)	50%	0%	0%
Sherman (n=4)	75%	0%	25%
Gun Lake (n=6)	67%	50%	83%

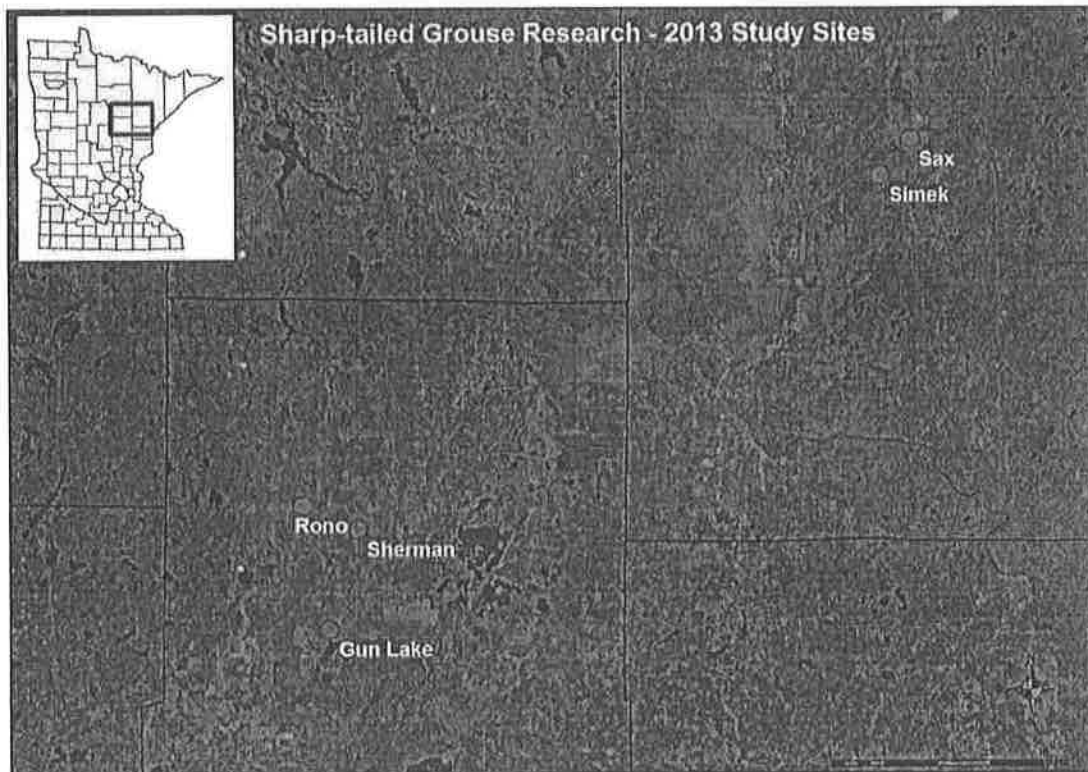


Figure 1. Study sites located in Aitkin and St. Louis counties, in the east-central portion of the sharp-tailed grouse range.

## Sue Bingham

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**From:** Patrick Wussow [patrick.wussow@co.aitkin.mn.us]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, August 06, 2013 3:46 PM  
**To:** 'Kanz, David J (DNR)'  
**Cc:** 'Sue Bingham'  
**Subject:** RE: County Board agenda

Dave

Statute 97A.145 identifies that the Aitkin County SWCD is to "counsel" the County Board on drainage and flood control and best utilization and capability of the land. I spoke with the SWCD staff and they could have their Board review the parcel of land and provide us with comments by August 21, which would allow County staff to include those comments in the report to the County Board at their August 27<sup>th</sup> regular meeting.

At this time, assuming all reports are received from SWCD on the 21<sup>st</sup> or before, your item will be reviewed by the County Board on August 27<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 a.m. in the County Board room. I also note that 97A.145 provides the County Board 90 days to approve or disapprove the acquisition after being notified, which starts with your notification today.

Please contact me if you have questions, but again at this time the item will not be discussed until August 27<sup>th</sup>.

---

**From:** Kanz, David J (DNR) [<mailto:david.kanz@state.mn.us>]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, August 06, 2013 3:07 PM  
**To:** Patrick Wussow  
**Cc:** Lightfoot, Jeff (DNR); Aarhus-Ward, Angela (DNR); Provost, Jodie (DNR); [jpavelko@pheasantsforever.org](mailto:jpavelko@pheasantsforever.org); Hennings, Kim R (DNR)  
**Subject:** RE: County Board agenda

Here are current calculations based on what Joe Pavelko found out.

Current Taxes - \$4,502  
PILT Payments – (based on \$2,363,000 appraised value) \$17,715

Please let me know if you need additional information.

Dave

---

**From:** Patrick Wussow [<mailto:patrick.wussow@co.aitkin.mn.us>]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, August 06, 2013 2:49 PM  
**To:** Kanz, David J (DNR)  
**Cc:** Lightfoot, Jeff (DNR); Aarhus-Ward, Angela (DNR); Provost, Jodie (DNR); [jpavelko@pheasantsforever.org](mailto:jpavelko@pheasantsforever.org); Hennings, Kim R (DNR)  
**Subject:** RE: County Board agenda

Dave:

Additional information is necessary. The Board will want to know what the PILT payment will be in relation to the current taxes. Will you be able to provide that by noon tomorrow?

Patrick Wussow  
Aitkin County Administrator

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**From:** Kanz, David J (DNR) [<mailto:david.kanz@state.mn.us>]

**Sent:** Tuesday, August 06, 2013 2:43 PM

**To:** [patrick.wussow@co.aitkin.mn.us](mailto:patrick.wussow@co.aitkin.mn.us)

**Cc:** Lightfoot, Jeff (DNR); Aarhus-Ward, Angela (DNR); Provost, Jodie (DNR); [jpavelko@pheasantsforever.org](mailto:jpavelko@pheasantsforever.org); Hennings, Kim R (DNR)

**Subject:** County Board agenda

Pat,

Attached is our request to come to the County Board to seek approval for a new addition to the Gun Lake WMA. Please let us know when we are the agenda. We look forward to working with you.

Sincerely,

Dave Kanz  
Acting Area Wildlife Manager  
Aitkin/ Brainerd  
1200 Minnesota Avenue South  
Aitkin, MN 56431  
218-927-6915 x 251



August 20, 2013

To: Aitkin County Board of Commissioners

Patrick Wussow, County Administrator

The Aitkin County Soil and Water Conservation District Board of Supervisors met on August 20, 2013 and reviewed the proposed acquisition of 762 acres of land in sections 4 and 5 of Fleming Township. It is understood that the proposed acquisition would be managed by the DNR as part of the Gun Lake Wildlife Management Area (WMA). Several points were discussed by SWCD Board members:

1. The Board agreed that keeping a healthy agricultural base in Aitkin County would be of great benefit to the local economy and to land use diversity.
2. It is understood that the two likely options for this property are: 1. the sale that would result in an expansion to the Gun Lake WMA or 2. continued pursuit of wetland bank credits by the landowners.
3. PILT payments would benefit the county and its taxpayers if the land were owned and managed as a WMA.
4. The land would likely remain in some level of agricultural production under the DNR WMA plan and would not remain in agricultural production if it became a wetland bank.
5. Water quality and quantity would likely be similar under either plan.
6. Wildlife (especially open-land species) would benefit from the WMA plan.
7. The existing sharptail grouse habitat and observation blinds located adjacent to the property, have tourism value and do benefit local businesses, this may be lost if the land becomes a wetland bank.
8. The existing public ditches likely provide benefits to adjacent properties and should remain open under either option.

After lengthy discussion the SWCD Board did not recommend either option 1 or 2 but did list the discussion points above for the Aitkin County Board's consideration.

Summarized from the SWCD Board discussion by Steve Hughes, SWCD District Manager



## Patrick Wussow

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**From:** Curtis Sparks <curtsparky@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, October 01, 2013 6:23 AM  
**To:** Patrick Wussow; Anne Marcotte  
**Cc:** thompsonfarms; Ward Julien; Kanz, David J (DNR); jpavelko@pheasantsforever.org; Stu Grubb  
**Subject:** Re: Aitkin County Board Meeting October 8  
**Attachments:** Issues and Comments 9-30-13.docx

Mr. Wussow, attached are comments prepared to clarify and address issues that were raised at the County Board meeting of August 27th. If you have any questions do not hesitate to contact me by email or call 612-616-6438.

Curtis J. Sparks, P.E.  
Sparks Environmental Consulting  
612-616-6438

On Thu, Sep 19, 2013 at 8:26 PM, Patrick Wussow <[patrick.wussow@co.aitkin.mn.us](mailto:patrick.wussow@co.aitkin.mn.us)> wrote:  
Noon on October 1st.

Sent from my iPad

On Sep 19, 2013, at 8:13 PM, Curtis Sparks <[curtsparky@gmail.com](mailto:curtsparky@gmail.com)> wrote:

I represent the Thomsons on their sale of land to Pheasants Forever. Several items came up in discussion at the August 27 board meeting. We are preparing a response. When does this response need to be supplied to you for inclusion in the Board Packet?

Thank you in advance for your information. Feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

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Curtis J. Sparks, P.E.  
Sparks Environmental Consulting  
612-616-6438

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Curtis J. Sparks, P.E.  
Sparks Environmental Consulting  
612-616-6438

October 1, 2013

The following are issues and comments from the landowners of the proposed sale of land to MDNR and Pheasants Forever. These issues were discussed in the County Board Meeting August 27, 2013.

#### Issues and Comments

1. Aitkin County Board has 90 days to make a decision. There is no urgency to make a decision.  
Comment – There is an impact to the buyers and the sellers in this transaction if the sale is delayed. The landowner has to make a decision on whether to pursue marketing approximately 600 acres of wetland credits. A part 1 application for wetland banking has been submitted to the Aitkin County TEP. The part 2 application is on hold pending the sale of the land to Pheasants Forever. Pheasants Forever has made an offer to purchase the land at close to the appraised value of the land. 2013 and 2014 State grant funds have been approved for this purchase. If closing of the sale is delayed beyond the time 2013 funds can be used, a new funding plan is needed. If the sale is delayed, the landowner may decide bank wetland credits or to pursue the sale of credits to any entity needing a large source of wetland credits.

2. There are 3 parties in the land sale that would occur in 2 transactions. The first is between Thompson Farms and Pheasants Forever a non-governmental organization. The second is between Pheasants Forever and the Minnesota DNR a governmental organization.  
Comment – Pheasants Forever will not purchase the land if DNR does not or is not able to purchase the land from Pheasants Forever. The second transaction is the subject of this county approval only because a small part of the funding is Reinvest in Minnesota Grant dollars. There is no county authority over a sale of land between the landowner and Pheasants Forever. If the County withholds a decision for more than 90 days either party can take the matter to the State Land Exchange Board for approval. If the County Board makes a decision within 90 days and disapproves the purchase, either party must first obtain a District Court decision that the reasons stated by the county for denial were arbitrary or capricious before going to the land exchange board. This would result in added time and cost to all the parties.

As another alternative, the Pheasants Forever transaction with the landowner could be made without RIM funds. In this case, no county action is required.

3. Sale of the land takes the property off the tax role. Does the County lose any tax revenue from this sale?  
Comment – Sale of the land to DNR will require a payment in lieu of tax (PILT) at the DNR appraised value. For the first 6 years the PILT funds will be approximately \$17,750 while the current tax on the land is \$4502. After 6 years the land will be re-appraised by the County, presumably at agricultural uses. However, this land will be taxed at a 0.75% rate rather than the 0.5% rate agricultural land is taxed by Aitkin County. In no case would the County receive less

than the private ownership property tax currently assessed to the landowner. In other words, there will be a net increase in tax revenue to Aitkin County if DNR purchases the property. In fact Aitkin County saw an increase of \$348,598 in PILT payments from 2012 to 2013 due to recent legislative changes in PILT payment rates. DNR ownership of this land is a benefit to county taxpayers by increased taxes. It also makes high value habitat, hunting and other recreational use land available for public use.

4. Why are Pheasants Forever and DNR before the County asking approval of a sale to DNR?

Comment - The DNR is to seek approval from the County for purchasing land under the Reinvest in Minnesota Program. Of the funds allocated to purchase this land, \$75,000 is RIM money. Without RIM money this project would not be before the County. RIM is a program where a landowner donates land and receives compensation up to 50% through RIM. In this case, the landowner is donating \$152,000 to DNR through this purchase.

5. 53.5% of Aitkin County is state owned land. If approved, another 762 acres will be added to this amount.

Comment – This is correct. 623,982 acres of land (excluding water) in Aitkin County are state owned according to the MDNR Division of Lands and Minerals Records Summary Submitted By County Revised 5/22/2012. Another 762 acres added to this total represents an increase of 0.066%. With this very small change there will be an increase in tax revenue to Aitkin County. This benefits Aitkin County tax payers.

6. How are projects selected for DNR purchase?

Comment – DNR screens all acquisitions through a multi-stage process including area, regional and St. Paul Staff. They use a quantitative scoring system to set acquisition priorities. This property represents a unique opportunity to provide a continuous large tract of land open to hunting and other recreational uses that doesn't present itself in any other land acquisition. Normally, hunting land acquisitions are small acreage in largely agriculturally dominated land uses. This site has been on the DNR list of interested properties for many years. When the landowner showed interest in selling this land it was already a high priority for acquisition.

7. Why is Pheasants Forever interested in this land? Was Aitkin County targeted for this type of acquisition?

Comment – Pheasants Forever is acting as a broker for land purchases under the Lessard Sams Council. Funds from 2013 and 2014 are set aside for this acquisition. In addition, funds from other nonprofits like Minnesota Sharp-Tailed Grouse Society and others are used. After the land is acquired it is sold to the DNR for the purpose of long term management as habitat and hunting of a once top game bird species in Minnesota the Sharp-Tail Grouse. Over the last 50 years this game bird lost most of its habitat and became a species of interest due to the losses that occurred. The goal of Pheasants Forever is to provide hunting opportunities for this and other species through securing habitat for managing the species at huntable levels. Aitkin County is one of the most important locations for Sharp-Tail Management.



8. Is the appraisal for this property available to the County?

Comment – The appraised value has been provided to Aitkin County by the DNR. The purchase price of the land will be provided to the County when it is purchased by Pheasants Forever. At that time, the independent appraisal can be released. As indicated in the County Board Meeting the appraisal considers other uses of the land beyond agriculture. In this case, a Part A application for wetland banking was submitted and reviewed by the Technical Evaluation Panel of the County. Based on this information it is projected that the land is effectively drained such that approximately 600 acres would qualify for mitigation credits. The cost of the analysis is also a value assigned to the property. This appraisal is not the same as an appraisal for the taxable value of agricultural land conducted by Aitkin County. A comparison of this appraisal to the County's appraisal process is not appropriate.

9. The loss of farm land seemed to be an issue for some commissioners.

Comment- Landowners have the right to sell their land to anyone without County Board approval. Aitkin County can interfere but not stop the sale of this land only because RIM funds are proposed in the sale. The landowner proposes to place 762 acres of their land into conservation through a sale to Pheasants Forever. If a parcel of land has a higher economic value use than its current use, there is currently nothing to prevent a landowner from selling land for a higher use. There are many other benefits in this transaction.



**From:** Becky Sovde [mailto:becky.sovde@co.aitkin.mn.us]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, October 01, 2013 2:49 PM  
**To:** 'Patrick Wussow'  
**Cc:** 'Terry Neff'; 'Steve Hughes'  
**Subject:** RE: Aitkin County Board Meeting October 8

Pat –

The applicants (and their agent) provided us with a Scoping Document. A scoping document presents information regarding a site and the TEP looks at the information and recommends to the applicant whether or not to move forward into the Parts A & B. (Note that the process has slightly changed now.) I've attached a letter that we sent to the applicant's agent after reviewing the scoping document. Originally our recommendation is that they NOT move forward with any proposed wetland banking site.

In the late spring/summer of 2012, the applicants did some water table monitoring to determine if wetland hydrology exists on the site. Their findings were encouraging, however, no information or plans were received by the TEP after receiving the hydrologic monitoring assessment.

The 600-acre figure they quote in their comments may be accurate or may be completely inaccurate. I'm sure there are some credits out there, but much more detail is required before making any kind of determination. Also, because of the significant amount of reed canary on and near the site, the Corps of Engineers was not encouraged.

Even if there is a potential for a certain acreage, if performance standards are not met on a wetland bank, no credits are released. If any site re-established wetland hydrology, but they are battling reed canary or other invasives, they may never get credits released, in which case the amount of credits is zero. Reed canary is an issue because in most cases the veg is a problem for many years, and comes back after the site has been approved, because landowners are no longer intensely managing it for credits.

Let me know if you have additional questions.

Becky

# AITKIN COUNTY ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES-PLANNING & ZONING

209 Second Street, NW  
Aitkin, Minnesota 56431

PH: (218) 927-7342  
FX: (218) 927-4372



March 26, 2012

RE: Scoping Document

Stu Grubb  
Grubb Environmental Services  
11395 Lansing Avenue North  
Stillwater, MN 55082

Dear Mr. Grubb:

The Technical Evaluation Panel (TEP) and Local Governing Unit reviewed the information you provided for a Replacement Wetland Scoping Document at the March 14, 2012 TEP meeting. The Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) and Army Corps of Engineers St. Paul Office staff were also able to contribute comments via a conference call.

The information requested through the scoping document does not ask for you what actions eligible for credit would be requested, however, there are some concerns about what criteria would qualify the fields to meet any eligibility requirements.

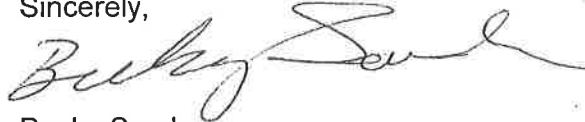
- 1) Cropping history requires 10 of the last 20 years be planted to an annually seeded crop or be in rotation with seeded hayland (such as alfalfa or clover). Per the Cropping History table you supplied, these fields were not seeded into crops until 2006, with the exception of a portion of Field 2 and a small part of Field 7. There are some areas that may qualify with set-aside programs, however, more detail is needed to determine if there is any eligibility. If cropping history minimums are not met, you can't use Subpart 4 or 5 for crediting.
- 2) There is a mix of public and private ditching. Is there a plan to request ditch abandonment? What are the specific plans for the public ditches? Are the private ditches going to be completely filled? Breaking tile lines was discussed in the plan, however, no plans for ditches were discussed. How will hydrology be restored if the surrounding state and county ditches remain functional? Is there adequate groundwater and surface water hydrology to restore this to a wetland state? Will other properties be affected by a restoration?
- 3) Currently portions of the site and surrounding areas have extensive reed canary, which is a persistent invasive. Existing restorations are having trouble controlling the reed canary. What processes will be used to eliminate this from being a long-term vegetation management problem on this site?
- 4) If a potential action eligible for crediting is completely drained wetlands, the TEP strongly encourages you to install monitoring wells to determine if wetland hydrology exists. This may also help determine where the tile lines are and if the lines and ditches are functioning.

In general, it appears that there is very little crediting available for this site. More information on existing hydrology and vegetative history might provide some additional insight into potential credits.

The TEP is interested in doing an onsite before a recommendation is made on this project. The next scheduled TEP meeting is April 11, 2012. Would you be able to meet us that Wednesday afternoon?

Please give me a call at 218-927-7342.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Becky Sovde".

Becky Sovde  
Wetland Specialist/Compliance Officer  
Aitkin County

Cc: TEP



The intent of this Management Guidance Document is to describe the purpose of this Wildlife Management Area (WMA) and provide basic information to resource managers within the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (MNDNR). This document is developed by consolidating several Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and other databases along with input from MNDNR Area Wildlife Staff. Please note the version dates on this document.

## GUN LAKE WMA MANAGEMENT GUIDANCE DOCUMENT WMA0162500

**Prepared By:** Dave Dickey Aitkin Area Wildlife September 2009

**Reviewed By:** Dave Olfelt, NE Region Wildlife, October 2009

**Location:** The center of the WMA is located within, S 4, T 48N, R 25W (Fleming Township)

**Nearby Units:** (2.5 mile radius)

None

**County:** Aitkin (1)

**Manager:** Gary Drotts

**Contact:** Aitkin Area Wildlife  
1200 Minnesota Ave. S.  
Aitkin MN 56431  
218-927-7500 ext 250

**WMA Land Type(s):** Acres

ACQ (Purchased) 78.3

Total Managed

**Federal Aid (Acquisition):** No.

**Nat. Heritage Features:**<sup>1</sup> None identified. Source: DNR's Natural Heritage & Nongame Research Program 2009.

**Cultural Heritage Features:**<sup>1</sup> None identified.

Source: State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) - Minnesota Historical Society

**Easements & Licenses:**<sup>1</sup> None.

**ECS Description:** Tamarack Lowlands, N. Minnesota Drift & Lake Plains

**History:** This parcel of land has had a sharp-tailed grouse lek on it since at least 1987. A viewing blind has been on the lek for years to allow people to observe this rite of spring. The Minnesota Sharp-tailed Grouse Society proposed acquiring the land when the land owner suggested that they would be interested in selling it so that they could purchase a better piece of hay land. Through fund raising efforts of MSGS, the necessary funds were secured for a RIM Match and the acquisition was completed in 2009.

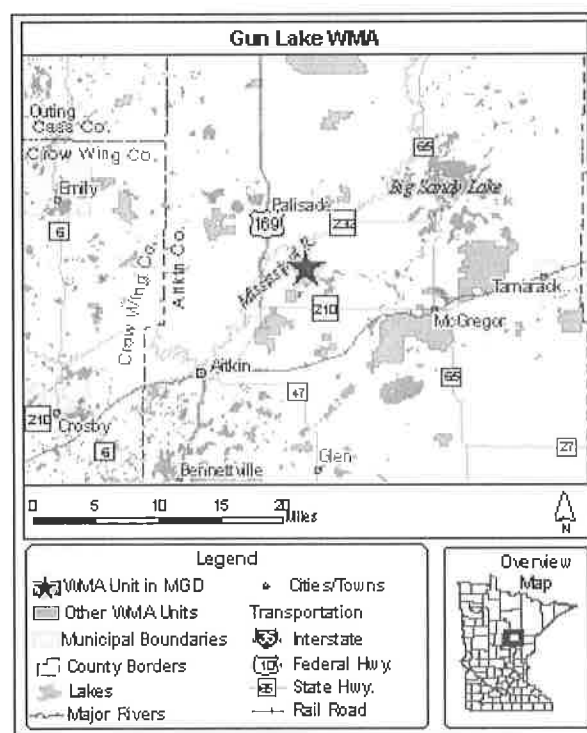


Figure 1: WMA Location Map.

<sup>1</sup> These data are not based on a comprehensive inventory of the state. The lack of data for any geographic area shall not be construed to mean that no significant features are present.

**Description:** 80 acres of basically upland grass. Surrounding land to the east, north, and west was hay land but has been in row crops recently due to high commodity prices. Some brush land occurs about ½ mile to the south and to the west.

**Access:** Public access is from a township road along the south side with a parking pad at the southeast corner.

**Special Regulations or Comments:** Efforts need to be made to protect the male sharp-tailed grouse from over harvest as they are known to hang around the lek year round. Viewing blinds at the lek site will be made available for public use each spring.

**Land Acquisition:** Additional parcels should be acquired if they become available to provide additional nesting habitat.

**Habitat Management:** The open land habitat will be managed with periodic prescribed fire and mowing. Approximately ¼ of the area will be hayed each year through a Cooperative Farming Agreement. Additional nearby habitat is being managed on private parcels through the Private Lands Program.

**Facility Development:** The main access will be developed at the southeast corner with a gravel parking pad.

**Table 1: Habitat Management and Development (FIM Version 2 data)**

Current Habitat Type <sup>2</sup>	Total Acres <sup>3</sup>	Main Historical Type	Main Future Type	Management Objective	Comments/Challenges/Management Practices
84 Upland Grass	78.3		Upland Grass	Sharp-tailed grouse	Prescribed fire/mowing

**Table 2: Unit Development and Facility Maintenance (Only Priority Facilities in GIS)**

Facility/Feature	Date (Built)	Unit Total	Replacement/Additions & Comments
Gravel Parking Lot - 12200	2009	1	

2 Current Habitat Type is taken from the Forestry Inventory - FIM. This layer is a digital inventory of individual forest stands. The data is collected by DNR Foresters in each DNR Forestry Administrative Area, and is updated on a continuous basis, as needed. Here is the metadata link. [FIM Version 2](#)

3 Acreages determined from GIS cover type database. Total acreage across cover types may not equal total managed acres reported on page 1.

Figure 2. WMA Habitat Management Map



Figure 3. WMA Boundary and Facility Map







**From:** Kanz, David J (DNR) [<mailto:david.kanz@state.mn.us>]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, October 01, 2013 10:27 AM  
**To:** Patrick Wussow  
**Subject:** RE: Several Questions related to WMA's in Aitkin County

Good morning Pat, here are some answers (in blue) to the questions that have arisen. Call if you need more.

Dave

**From:** Patrick Wussow [<mailto:patrick.wussow@co.aitkin.mn.us>]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, September 25, 2013 5:16 PM  
**To:** Kanz, David J (DNR)  
**Cc:** Anne Marcotte; [mark.wedel@co.aitkin.mn.us](mailto:mark.wedel@co.aitkin.mn.us)  
**Subject:** Several Questions related to WMA's in Aitkin County

David

After reviewing the Gun Lake WMA Management Guidance Document I have some questions that I hope you can address, prior to writing the County's staff report next week:

1. What is the DNR's Budgeted and Actual expenses for operating the Gun Lake WMA. The Brainerd Wildlife Area has 30K out of our Game and Fish Funds that can be used to manage 46 WMAs in three counties. In addition, I can use a portion of our dedicated Deer/Bear (D/B-15K) and Deer Management Account (DMA-29K) Funds for access and boundary management on WMAs. We have not expended any of those funds this fiscal year for the Gun Lake WMA. What fund are these expenditures coming from and does it include the expenses related to reports including the 2013 Field Season Progress Report created by Lindsey M. Shartell. PHD, Forest Habitat Assessment Biologist, Forest Wildlife Habitat Team, MN DNR Division of Fish and Wildlife? The Game and Fish funds come from the sale of hunting license stamps (waterfowl, pheasant, and turkey) and a portion of the deer and bear licenses (D/B and DMA) and a surcharge on the small game license. Lindsey's research budget is separate from mine and I can get her funding sources if you want.
2. In the Guidance Document, under the section of Land Acquisition it identifies "Additional parcels should be acquired if they become available..." Can you identify how many total acres are being sought for this WMA and how long the DNR has identified the acres currently being discussed for purchase? The original WMA proposal Dec. 2007 (see attached info sheet) had plans for 755 acres. 232 acres were already public land administered by Aitkin County. Letters were sent to those landowners explaining the acquisition and donation process. After the interest from the Thompsons about their other adjacent lands, a supplemental proposal was submitted.
3. In the Guidance Document, under the section of Habitat Management it identifies that "Approximately ¼ of the area will be hayed each year through a Cooperative Farming Agreement." Please provide me with a copy of the Cooperative Farming Agreement. I am asking this because neighbors of this parcel have indicated that the haying has not been done as identified in the Gun Lake WMA Management Guidance Document. In the meantime, I will attempt to talk with more neighbors to verify this statement. There have been no Cooperative Farming Agreements on the Gun Lake WMA. I believe there

was interest from the sellers to do some haying, but that did not occur. One of their interests in selling this land to the DNR was that it was not very good hay land.

4. In the Guidance Document, under the section of Special Regulations or Comments it identifies that “Efforts need to be mad to protect the male sharp-tail grouse from over harvest as they are known to hang around the lek year round.” But it does not identify what efforts are being taken to protect the male sharp-tail. From My site visit I believe a portion of the land is identified as no hunting. Is that one of the efforts? Yes, a 20 acre portion is a wildlife sanctuary, closed to trespass from Sept-March 31. (pg. 100 in 2013 MN Hunting and Trapping Regulations Handbook).

Thank you for addressing my questions.

Patrick Wussow  
Aitkin County Administrator



# Proposed Gun Lake WMA Fact Sheet



## Location:

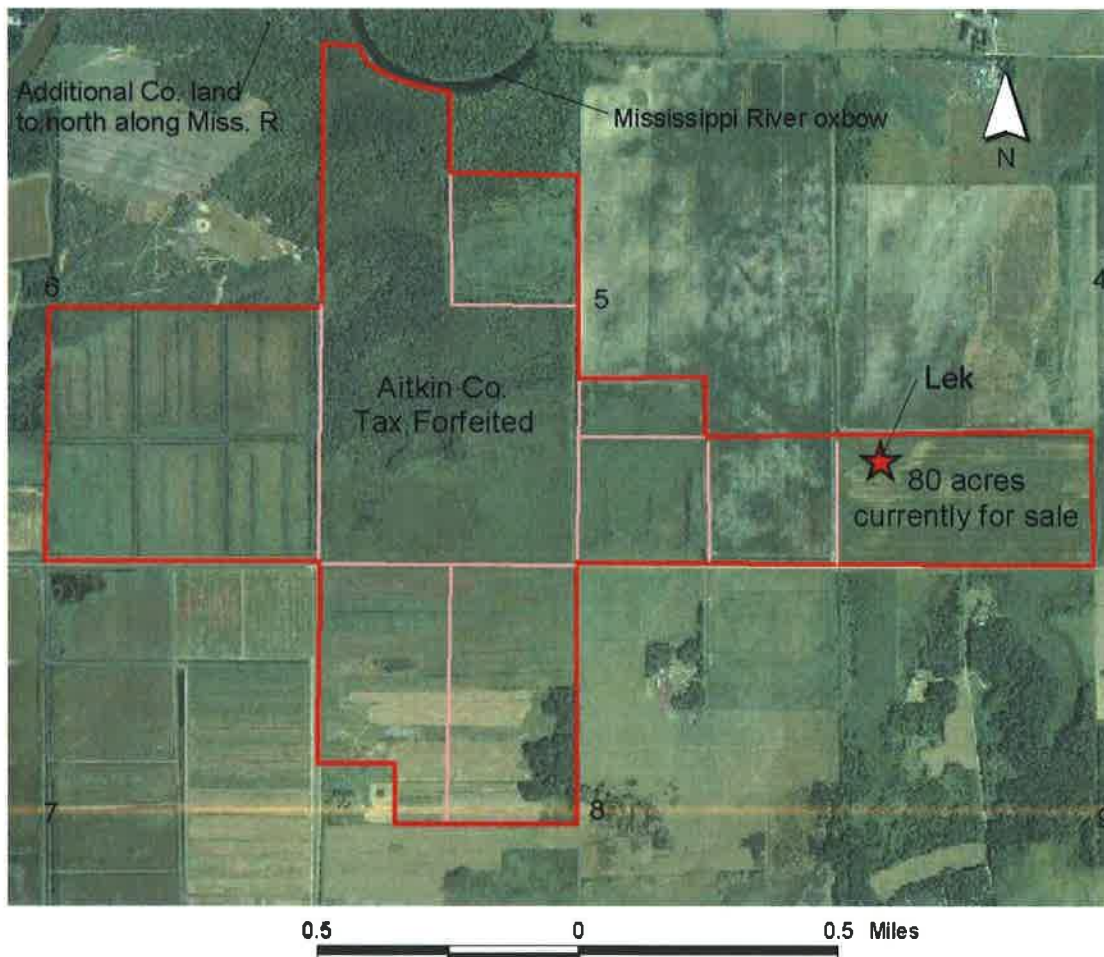
- Sections 4, 5, 6 and 8 in Fleming Township (T48N, R25W), Aitkin County (755 acres)

## Habitat:

- Approximately 152 acres of forest, 563 acres of brushland and 40 acres of cultivated crop field.

## Purpose of Gun Lake WMA:

- To protect a critical, sharp-tailed grouse lek and surrounding brushland habitat to sustain the east-central Minnesota sharp-tailed grouse population and other wildlife populations.
- To provide additional public lands for hunting and outdoor recreation.
- To provide additional habitat and conservation benefits along the Mississippi River corridor.
- To continue providing an accessible and educational blind at a lek site for the public.



## **Justification for Gun Lake WMA:**

- Based upon the sharp-tailed grouse lek's longevity and number of birds that use it, it is one of thirteen leks in east-central Minnesota that has the greatest potential to serve as a core, source population.
- The lek is located on private land that is threatened by intensive agriculture. 87% of known leks in east-central Minnesota are located on private land and many are threatened by development, land parcelization, succession, tree planting or conversion to intensive agriculture .
- Sharp-tailed grouse are a valuable indicator of the availability and quality of brushlands.
- Sharp-tailed grouse are a Species in Greatest Conservation Need, as noted in the Minnesota Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy.
- Other Species in Greatest Conservation Need will also benefit, including Nelson's sharp-tailed sparrow, short-eared owl, northern harrier, bobolink, peregrine falcon, loggerhead shrike and Henslow's sparrow.
- A viewing blind allowed at the lek each spring provides an accessible site at a reliable lek for the public to enjoy, learn about, and appreciate brushland wildlife. It is very popular and has served to educate the public and draw wildlife enthusiasts to the area for 15 years!
- Long Lake Conservation Center is located four miles away. The WMA, secure lek site and viewing blind would offer educational opportunities for its students and visitors.
- Acquisition would expand upon existing public land (Aitkin County Tax Forfeited) which has approximately 77 acres managed as brushland and the remainder as forest.
- Acquisition would provide additional habitat and conservation benefits along the Mississippi River corridor. The Mississippi River and an oxbow are adjacent to the Aitkin County Tax Forfeited land.
- The conservation community supports the proposed WMA, as evidenced by interest from several conservation organizations in helping to acquire it.
- Land prices continue to rise. This land can be purchased for a fraction of the price of land in western and southern Minnesota.

## **Donation & Acquisition Facts:**

- DNR Wildlife has approved the WMA proposal and will accept cash donations to acquire the land or land donations within the proposed WMA.
- The most critical 80-acre tract of the proposed WMA, an old, unused hay field, is currently for sale. The lek site and essential, adjacent nesting cover are located on this tract. The county's assessed value of the tract is \$56,000.
- Several conservation organizations have been approached regarding their interest in assisting with acquisition. A positive response by organizations and individuals has resulted in a total of \$37,050 in pledged contributions to date.
- Donations can be matched through the DNR Reinvest in Minnesota (RIM) critical habitat match program (<http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/grants/land/rim.html> ). To receive the match, donors need to apply and can specify how they would like RIM Match credits spent. (\$12,050 of the above contributions can be matched. The remaining \$25,000 is RIM Match credits.)
- If land is donated to DNR, County Board approval is not needed. If land is acquired by DNR (as is needed to use RIM Match credits), County Board approval is needed.
- If land is acquired by DNR, DNR cannot discuss price with prospective sellers until after property is appraised.

**Project Contacts:** David Dickey, DNR Area Wildlife Manager, 218-927-6915  
Jodie Provost, DNR Wildlife Private Lands Specialist, 218-927-2982





### Thompson Property

#### Section 4

Parcel	# of acres	Legal	2013 Value	2013 Tax	
08-0-004900	41.38	Frac NE NE	82,300.00	478.00	L=51,300 + B=31,000
08-0-005000	40.95	Frac NW NE	41,400.00	226.00	Land only
08-0-005100	40	SW NE	37,300.00	226.00	Land only
08-0-005200	40	SE NE	40,400.00	220.00	Land only
08-0-005500	40	SW NW	36,300.00	220.00	Land only
08-0-005600	40	SE NW	37,300.00	226.00	Land only
08-0-005800	40	NE SW	37,300.00	226.00	Land only
08-0-005900	40	NW SW	37,300.00	226.00	Land only
08-0-006200	40	NE SE	40,300.00	220.00	Land only
08-0-006300	40	NW SE	37,300.00	226.00	Land only
08-0-006400	40	SW SE	40,300.00	220.00	Land only
08-0-006500	40	SE SE	39,300.00	214.00	Land only

#### Section 5

08-0-006600	39.85	Frac NE NE	37,300.00	226.00	Land only
08-0-067000	39.85	Frac NW NE	37,300.00	230.00	Land only
08-0-006800	40	SW NE	37,300.00	226.00	Land only
08-0-006900	40	SE NE	36,300.00	220.00	Land only
08-0-007900	40	NE SE	37,300.00	226.00	Land only
08-0-008000	40	NW SE	37,300.00	226.00	Land only
08-0-008200	40	SE SE	40,300.00	220.00	Land only

<b>Totals</b>	<b>762.03</b>		<b>769,900.00</b>	<b>4,502.00</b>	
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# Pennington Co. to sell tax forfeited land

by Scott DCamp  
Reporter

Six hundred and forty acres of tax forfeited property located in Star Township, Pennington County will soon be sold and returned to Pennington County's tax rolls. During the Pennington County Board meeting on Tuesday, Sept. 10, commissioners approved a resolution authorizing the sale by public auction at 10 a.m. on Friday, Oct. 25.

A breakdown of that prop-

erty includes 160 acres in Section 12; separate 40- and 320-acre parcels in Section 13; and 120 acres in Section 25.

It isn't an official land exchange, but the state of Minnesota gave Pennington County permission to sell the tax forfeited properties earlier this year, while Pennington County gave the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources its blessing to acquire a 160-acre parcel in the southeast quarter of section 30 in Bray

Township.

Pennington County was willing to back off its "No Net Loss" clause, under which it would not allow the direct sale of private land to a state agency without a property of equal value being returned to private land.

All of the parcels that will be sold next month have been in forfeiture for at least 38 years, and portions have sat in forfeiture since 1954.

The County Board originally planned to break the

640 acres into 15 40-acre tracts and two 20-acre tracts that would be sold separately. Some of the tracts do not have access from county or township roads, however, so the County Board authorized Auditor Ken Olson to determine if there are any recorded easements, and potentially combine some properties into 80- and 120-acre parcels to ensure access.

Each of the 17 parcels includes an appraised value and an estimated timber

value. The bidding for each parcel will start at the appraised value. Any parcel that is not sold during the public sale may be purchased after the public sale by paying the base sale price.

Before the sale can proceed, the County Board must publish a notice of the sale in consecutive editions of the county's legal newspaper. The County Board plans to provide notice of the sale in the Sept. 25 and Oct. 2

(Continued on Page 8)

## Pennington Co. to sell tax forfeited land

(Continued from Page 1)  
editions of The Times.

The current parcel listings, which are subject to change, include:

• Parcel 1 - NW1/4/SE1/4  
Sec. 12, \$1,870 timber value,  
\$11,200 base price.

• Parcel 2 - NE1/4SE1/4  
Sec. 12, \$1,421.20 timber  
value, \$ 9,600 base price.

• Parcel 3 - SE1/4SE1/4,  
Sec. 12, \$7,180.80 timber  
value, \$16,700 base price.

• Parcel 4 - SW1/4SE1/4,  
Sec. 12, \$1,084.60 timber  
value, \$9,600 base price.

• Parcel 5  
NW1/4NE1/4, Sec. 13, no  
timber, \$8,100 base price.

• Parcel 6 - NE1/4NE1/4,  
Sec. 13, \$7,031.20 timber  
value, \$17,000 base price.

• Parcel 7 - SE1/4NE1/4,  
Sec. 13, \$3,515.60 timber  
value, \$12,700 base price.

• Parcel 8 - SW1/4NE1/4,  
Sec. 13, \$9,724 timber value,  
\$20,300 base price.

• Parcel 9 - NW1/4SE1/4,

Sec. 13, \$1,346 timber value,  
\$9,500 base price.

• Parcel 10  
NE1/4SE1/4, Sec. 13, \$4,488  
timber value, \$14,000 base  
price.

• Parcel 11 - SE1/4SE1/4,  
Sec. 13, no timber, \$8,000  
base price.

• Parcel 12  
NW1/4NW1/4, Sec. 13,  
\$7,592.20 timber value,  
\$17,200 base price.

• Parcel 13  
SE1/4NW1/4, Sec. 13,  
\$1,159 timber value, \$9,400  
base price.

• Parcel 14  
E1/2NW1/4NW1/4, Sec. 25,  
no timber, \$4,000 base price.

• Parcel 15  
NE1/4NW1/4, Sec. 25, no  
timber, \$8,000 base price.

• Parcel 16  
SE1/4NW1/4, Sec. 25, no  
timber, \$8,000 base price.

• Parcel 17  
E1/2SW1/4NW1/4, Sec. 25,  
no timber, \$4,000 base price.

Handout  
Citizen's Public  
Comment





# Request for Funding

## Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council Fiscal Year 2015 / ML 2014

**Program or Project Title:** Northeastern Minnesota Sharp-tailed Grouse Habitat Partnership

**Funds Requested:** \$5,848,000

**Manager's Name:** Ward Julien  
**Title:** Board Member & Treasurer  
**Organization:** Minnesota Sharp-tailed Grouse Society  
**Street Address:** 644 - 107th Lane NW  
**City:** Coon Rapids, MN 55448  
**Telephone:** (763)-754-8361  
**E-Mail:** wjulien@peoplepc.com  
**Organization Web Site:** www.sharptails.org

**County Locations:** Aitkin, Carlton, Kanabec, Pine, and St. Louis.

### Ecological Planning Regions:

- Northern Forest

### Activity Type:

- Restore
- Enhance
- Protect in Fee

### Priority Resources Addressed by Activity:

- Habitat

### Abstract:

This partnership will protect, restore and enhance 5,086 acres, primarily brushland, in northeastern Minnesota. Habitat will be added to the WMA system and enhanced on existing public lands for species in greatest conservation need, outdoor recreational opportunities and environmental benefits.

### Design and Scope of Work:

#### Problem and Scope:

Until the 1880s, most of Minnesota was inhabited by sharp-tailed grouse where suitable open and brushland habitat, such as prairies, savannas, sedge meadows and open bogs, occurred. This indigenous grouse was once one of Minnesota's most abundant game birds, with over 100,000 harvested annually in the 1940's. Loss, degradation and fragmentation of open and brushland habitat within Minnesota due to natural succession and conversion to other land uses (cropland and tree plantations) has led to a long term decline in this unique grouse's population (estimated harvest of 16,800 in 2010), causing its listing as a species in greatest conservation need. Today its remaining range in northern Minnesota, which is less than one-third of its historic range, is in jeopardy of additional fragmentation and degradation.

In east central Minnesota, research results have shown that genetic diversity of the sharp-tailed grouse population may be declining due to increasing isolation of subpopulations. In nearby Wisconsin, genetic diversity has declined so greatly that Wisconsin DNR has translocated sharp-tailed grouse to create a genetic infusion to

increase the likelihood of population persistence. Increasing the amount of protected brushland habitat in northeastern Minnesota will be critical to the sustainability of the local sharp-tailed grouse population and gene exchange between Minnesota and Wisconsin populations.

Specific habitat that will be affected and how actions will directly restore, enhance, and/or protect them:

Specific habitats to be affected will include up to 5,086 acres of openland, brushland, cropland and forest habitat. Acquisition of the habitats and their transfer to MDNR for management as state WMA will protect them. Natural habitats will include wet meadow, sedge meadow, shrub wetland, bog, grassland, and aspen and northern hardwoods forest. They will be enhanced with prescribed burning, mowing, shearing, timber harvest, and possibly grazing, biomass harvest and occasional haying. Other land includes hay, pasture and crop land that will be restored to open and brushland habitat through establishment of native vegetation, prescribed burning and natural succession.

Multiple benefits:

Multiple benefits of the above protection, enhancement and restoration actions will include increased plant and animal diversity, carbon sequestration, water retention and filtration, opportunities for biomass harvest, access to public lands for recreation, increases eco-tourism opportunities, economic benefits, and secure habitat for sharp-tailed grouse and other open and brushland species in greatest conservation need.

Wildlife species that will benefit:

In addition to sharp-tailed grouse, several other species that use or depend upon open and brushland habitats are also in decline, listed as species in greatest conservation need, and will benefit from this project, including bobolinks, loggerhead shrikes, short-eared owls, yellow rails, eastern meadowlarks, American bittern, northern harrier, golden-winged warblers, Henslow's sparrow, Le Conte's sparrow, Nelson's sharp-tailed sparrow, and American woodcock. Six of these species are state listed as endangered, threatened or special concern.

Game species that will benefit include white-tailed deer, waterfowl (mallards, blue-winged teal, Canada geese, and more species during migration), wild turkey, American woodcock, common snipe, ruffed grouse, cottontail rabbit, snowshoe hare, fox, raccoon, and bobcat. Many nongame species such as the Eastern bluebird, American kestrel, brown thrasher, gray catbird, common yellowthroat, sora rail, sedge wren, spring peeper and sandhill crane will benefit.

Urgency and opportunity:

If not acquired while the opportunities exist (i.e., willing sellers and funding opportunities), the chance to protect these priority tracts permanently from land practices incompatible as open and brushland wildlife habitat, and from fragmentation, parcelization and development may be lost. Incompatible land uses, such as building sites, tree plantings, and uncontrolled natural succession, on a tract not only negatively impacts the tract directly, but also surrounding habitat by fragmenting the open character of the land and impacting area-sensitive wildlife species, such as sharp-tailed grouse that are adapted to large open vistas.

How priorities were set / Parcel selection and scoring process:

For consideration of protection and enhancement efforts by the partnership, open and brushland tracts must be located within or at the edge of an ECS landtype association identified as a priority open landscape through DNR's SFRMP landscape planning process. Further criteria to prioritize which tracts are most critical include a ranking system based upon county location, distance to active sharp-tailed grouse lek, tract size, and distance to protected brushland. A sharp-tailed grouse habitat use model (attached) is being used to target brushland habitat for protection, restoration and enhancement.

Science-based strategic planning and evaluation:

This proposal is based on science-based strategic planning and evaluation. Biological planning, conservation design, delivery, monitoring and research, and adjustments in strategies as needed are used to maintain an adaptive approach.

Sharp-tailed grouse leks (dancing grounds) are the essential hubs of subpopulations. Nesting and brooding rearing occur in suitable habitat within approximately a two-mile radius of leks. All but one of the parcels proposed for protection have active leks either located on them or within ¼ mile away.

All tracts will be critical to sustaining nesting and brood rearing habitat for subpopulations of sharp-tailed grouse.



Research by Stanley Temple in Wisconsin suggests that suitable habitat patches of 4000 ha (roughly 10,000 acres, 15½ sq. miles, or a 2.2 mile radius circle) are needed for a sharp-tailed grouse population to survive.

A pilot study in Aitkin County was conducted in 2009 to examine habitat selection, nest success and survival of sharp-tailed grouse. Data from this study and a two-year study currently underway will provide additional information for adaptive management.

Annual spring surveys of sharp-tailed grouse leks allow for monitoring of local populations and the effect of habitat protection and enhancement and other land management activities on them.

#### Level of stakeholder opposition and involvement:

No stakeholder opposition to proposed acquisitions has been encountered. Proposals to protect land and manage them as public conservation lands are locally-driven by conservation groups, hunters, conservation agency staff, and willing sellers due to the multiple benefits such land protection and management can provide. Local government has been or will be contacted and their support sought.

## Planning

### **MN State-wide Conservation Plan Priorities:**

- H1 Protect priority land habitats
- H3 Improve connectivity and access to recreation
- H5 Restore land, wetlands and wetland-associated watersheds
- H7 Keep water on the landscape
- LU8 Protect large blocks of forest land

### **Plans Addressed:**

- A Vision for Wildlife and Its Use -- Goals and Outcomes 2006-2012
- Minnesota DNR Nongame Wildlife Plans
- Minnesota DNR Strategic Conservation Agenda
- Minnesota Forest Resource Council Landscape Plans
- Minnesota's Wildlife Management Area Acquisition - The Next 50 Years
- Outdoor Heritage Fund: A 25 Year Framework
- Partners in Flight Conservation Plans for States and Physiographic Regions
- State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan
- Tomorrow's Habitat for the Wild and Rare
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Strategic Habitat Conservation Model

### **LSOHC Statewide Priorities:**

- Address Minnesota landscapes that have historical value to fish and wildlife, wildlife species of greatest conservation need, Minnesota County Biological Survey data, and rare, threatened and endangered species inventories in land and water decisions, as well as long-term or permanent solutions to aquatic invasive species
- Are ongoing, successful, transparent and accountable programs addressing actions and targets of one or more of the ecological sections
- Ensures activities for "protecting, restoring and enhancing" are coordinated among agencies, non profits and others while doing this important work; provides the most cost-effective use of financial resources; and where possible takes into consideration the value of local outreach, education, and community engagement to sustain project outcomes
- Leverage effort and/or other funds to supplement any OHF appropriation
- Produce multiple enduring conservation benefits
- Provide Minnesotans with greater public access to outdoor environments with hunting, fishing and other outdoor recreation opportunities
- Restore or enhance habitat on permanently protected land
- Use a science-based strategic planning and evaluation model to guide protection, restoration and enhancement, similar to the United States Fish and Wildlife Service's Strategic Habitat Conservation model

### **LSOHC Northern Forest Section Priorities:**

- Provide access to manage habitat on landlocked public properties or protect forest land from parcelization and fragmentation through fee acquisition, conservation or access easement
- Restore and enhance habitat on existing protected properties, with preference to habitat for rare, endangered, or threatened species identified by the Minnesota County Biological Survey
- Restore forest-based wildlife habitat that has experienced substantial decline in area in recent decades

## **Relationship to Other Constitutional Funds:**

- No Relationships Listed

## **Accelerates or Supplements Current Efforts:**

Relationship to Other Constitutional Funds: The partnership will coordinate with other conservation organizations receiving Constitutional Funding to ensure projects are compatible and complementary, do not have duplicated efforts and together address the Council's statewide and section priorities.

Of the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund, Clean Water Fund, Parks and Trail Fund, and Outdoor Heritage Fund, this project is best suited to apply for funds from the latter because it is a habitat-based project. This project will have multiple natural resource, economic and social benefits, but its greatest benefit is in the habitat it will provide for a unique, native game bird that is also a species in greatest conservation need, the entire suite of plants and wildlife that also inhabit the same brushland communities, and the outdoor enthusiasts who enjoy and utilize them.

How this proposal accelerates or supplements current efforts: This partnership greatly accelerates and supplements protection, restoration and enhancement of brushland habitat. Prior to the availability of Outdoor Heritage grants, very little additional brushland habitat could be protected and opportunities were lost. Limited funds within DNR for acquisition were typically directed to western and southern Minnesota for protection of wetland and grassland habitat.

## **Sustainability and Maintenance:**

The proposed parcels will be part of the state WMA system, being sustained and managed by local DNR Wildlife Area staff involved in the partnership. Maintenance will be funded through the DNR budget, grants and funds provided by partners. Partner funds will be derived from conservation organization's general membership and grants, such as Outdoor Heritage and Conservation Partnership Legacy grants.

Stewardship plans for these tracts entail maintenance as integral portions of priority open landscapes. After initial protection and enhancement is completed, the primary habitat management technique will be prescribed burning. It will be used as needed, roughly once every three to seven years, to maintain their open structure and stimulate native vegetation. Brushland prescribed burn costs range from \$10-30/acre, depending upon burn unit size and equipment and personnel needed. Other habitat management techniques may be involve prescribed grazing or haying through cooperative agreements (no cost) or mechanical treatment of woody vegetation such as mowing (\$120/acre), shearing (\$70/acre), timber harvest (no cost), or biomass harvest.

## **Government Approval:**

*Will local government approval be sought prior to acquisition?* - **Yes**

## **Permanent Protection:**

*Is the land you plan to acquire free of any other permanent protection?* - **Yes**

## Hunting and Fishing Plan:

Is this land open for hunting and fishing? - **Yes**

Some of the proposed enhancement projects are on WMA and State Forest.

## Permanent Protection:

Is the activity on permanently protected land and/or public waters per MS 103G.005, Subd. 15? - **Yes (WMA, State Forests)**

## Accomplishment Timeline

Activity	Approximate Date Completed
Protection begins - Order appraisals for proposed acquisitions	July 2014
Enhancement begins - Mechanical brush treatments begin on public lands	July 2014
Protection completed - All tracts acquired and transferred to MDNR for WMA system	March 2015
Restoration begins - Native vegetation seeded on public land	June 2015
Enhancement underway - Initial site development completed	Sept. 2015
Enhancement underway - Prescribed burns completed; Restoration completed - Native vegetation seeded	June 2016
Enhancement underway - Summer mechanical brushland treatments completed on new acquisitions	Sept. 2016
Enhancement underway - Additional firebreaks cleared	March 2017
Enhancement completed - Additional prescribed burns completed	June 2017

## Outcomes

### Programs in the northern forest region:

- Forestlands are protected from development and fragmentation *Protected forestlands will be measured in acres added to the WMA system. Evaluation is not necessary as the lands will be permanent conservation lands.*
- Healthy populations of endangered, threatened, and special concern species as well as more common species *Surveys (such as lek, predator scent post, winter track, and small game hunter) will measure and evaluate sharp-tailed grouse and brushland wildlife populations.*
- Increased availability and improved condition of riparian forests and other habitat corridors *Habitat acres added which enhance corridors, habitat patch size and connectivity can be measured and evaluated for habitat quality and wildlife use through surveys.*
- Landlocked public properties have increased access for land managers *Newly protected habitat acres and the public habitat acres they help access can be measured and evaluated for habitat quality and wildlife use through surveys.*
- Greater public access for wildlife and outdoors-related recreation *More habitat acres open to hunting and additional access points will be available. Number of hunters can be estimated from license sales and hunter surveys.*
- Improved availability and improved condition of habitats that have experienced substantial decline *Addition brushland habitat acres protected, restored and enhanced can be measured and evaluated for improved conditions and wildlife use through surveys.*

- Addresses the “special concern of the conditions of brushlands within the forestlands.”

# Budget Spreadsheet

**Total Amount of Request: \$5,848,000**

## Budget and Cash Leverage

Budget Name	LSOHC Request	Anticipated Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Personnel	\$20,000	\$0		\$20,000
Contracts	\$443,400	\$0		\$443,400
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	\$4,703,000	\$0		\$4,703,000
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	\$0	\$0		\$0
Easement Acquisition	\$0	\$0		\$0
Easement Stewardship	\$0	\$0		\$0
Travel	\$0	\$0		\$0
Professional Services	\$52,000	\$0		\$52,000
Direct Support Services	\$0	\$0		\$0
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	\$63,000	\$0		\$63,000
Capital Equipment	\$0	\$0		\$0
Other Equipment/Tools	\$0	\$0		\$0
Supplies/Materials	\$566,600	\$1,700	Private Source	\$568,300
DNR IDP	\$0	\$48,200	DNR in kind service	\$48,200
Total	\$5,848,000	\$49,900	-	\$5,897,900

## Personnel

Position	FTE	Over # of years	LSOHC Request	Anticipated Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
PF Director of Conservation	0.10	2.00	\$12,000	\$0		\$12,000
PF Regional Representative	0.05	2.00	\$3,000	\$0		\$3,000
PF Director of Public Finance	0.10	2.00	\$5,000	\$0		\$5,000
Total	0.25	6.00	\$20,000	\$0	-	\$20,000

## Output Tables

**Table 1. Acres by Resource Type**

Type	Wetlands	Prairies	Forest	Habitats	Total
Restore	0	0	0	1,036	1,036
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	0	0	0	3,122	3,122
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	0	0	0	0	0
Protect in Easement	0	0	0	0	0
Enhance	0	0	0	3,584	3,584
Total	0	0	0	7,742	7,742

**Table 2. Total Requested Funding by Resource Type**

Type	Wetlands	Prairies	Forest	Habitats	Total
Restore	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$681,400	\$681,400
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$4,901,500	\$4,901,500
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Protect in Easement	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Enhance	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$265,100	\$265,100
Total	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$5,848,000	\$5,848,000

**Table 3. Acres within each Ecological Section**

Type	Metro/Urban	Forest/Prairie	SE Forest	Prairie	Northern Forest	Total
Restore	0	0	0	0	1,036	1,036
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	0	0	0	0	3,122	3,122
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	0	0	0	0	0	0
Protect in Easement	0	0	0	0	0	0
Enhance	0	0	0	0	3,584	3,584
Total	0	0	0	0	7,742	7,742

**Table 4. Total Requested Funding within each Ecological Section**

Type	Metro/Urban	Forest/Prairie	SE Forest	Prairie	Northern Forest	Total
Restore	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$681,400	\$681,400
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$4,901,500	\$4,901,500
Protect in Fee W/O State PILT Liability	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Protect in Easement	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Enhance	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$265,100	\$265,100
Total	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$5,848,000	\$5,848,000

**Table 5. Target Lake/Stream/River Miles**

0 miles

## Parcel List

### Section 1 - Restore / Enhance Parcel List

Aitkin

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?
Aitkin WMA Mow	04726203	56	\$6,400	Yes
Great River Mow	04826213	173	\$19,900	Yes
Thumb Island Mow	04823225	148	\$17,000	Yes
Wagner East Bog Mow	05026212	280	\$32,200	Yes
Wagner West Bog Mow	05026211	160	\$18,400	Yes

Carlton

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?
East Cross Lake Mow	04920222	38	\$4,400	Yes
Kettle Lake East Shear	04819215	576	\$34,800	Yes
Kettle Lake West Shear	04819218	257	\$15,500	Yes
Wrenshall WMA Mow	04716207	38	\$4,400	Yes

Pine

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?
Rutledge WMA Natives Seeding	04420236	50	\$31,200	Yes

St. Louis

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?
Cherry-Morrow Mow	05619216	75	\$8,600	Yes
Floodwood WMA Mow	05121211	38	\$4,400	Yes
Sax-Zim Mow	05518222	75	\$8,600	Yes

### Section 2 - Protect Parcel List

Aitkin

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
Herlache	05025215	40	\$39,800	No	No	No
Lawrence	05025214	160	\$130,800	No	No	No
Parchuc	04823213	40	\$43,400	No	No	No
Rezac	04726209	159	\$151,300	No	No	No



Carlton

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
Baars	04920221	40	\$43,200	No	No	No
Bennett	04920228	40	\$51,200	No	No	No
Casey	04920228	40	\$56,700	No	No	No
Eder	04920220	40	\$51,400	No	No	No
French	04920228	40	\$51,200	No	No	No
Graf	04920211	80	\$84,300	No	No	No
Klimek	04716207	20	\$41,200	No	No	No
Richards	04920221	37	\$48,400	No	No	No
Senese	04920220	20	\$25,400	No	No	No
T. Olson	04920229	40	\$51,200	No	No	No

Kanabec

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
Linder	04223235	806	\$1,070,600	No	No	No

Pine

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection?	Hunting?	Fishing?
Slade	04419220	480	\$563,900	No	No	No

### Section 2a - Protect Parcel with Bldgs

Aitkin

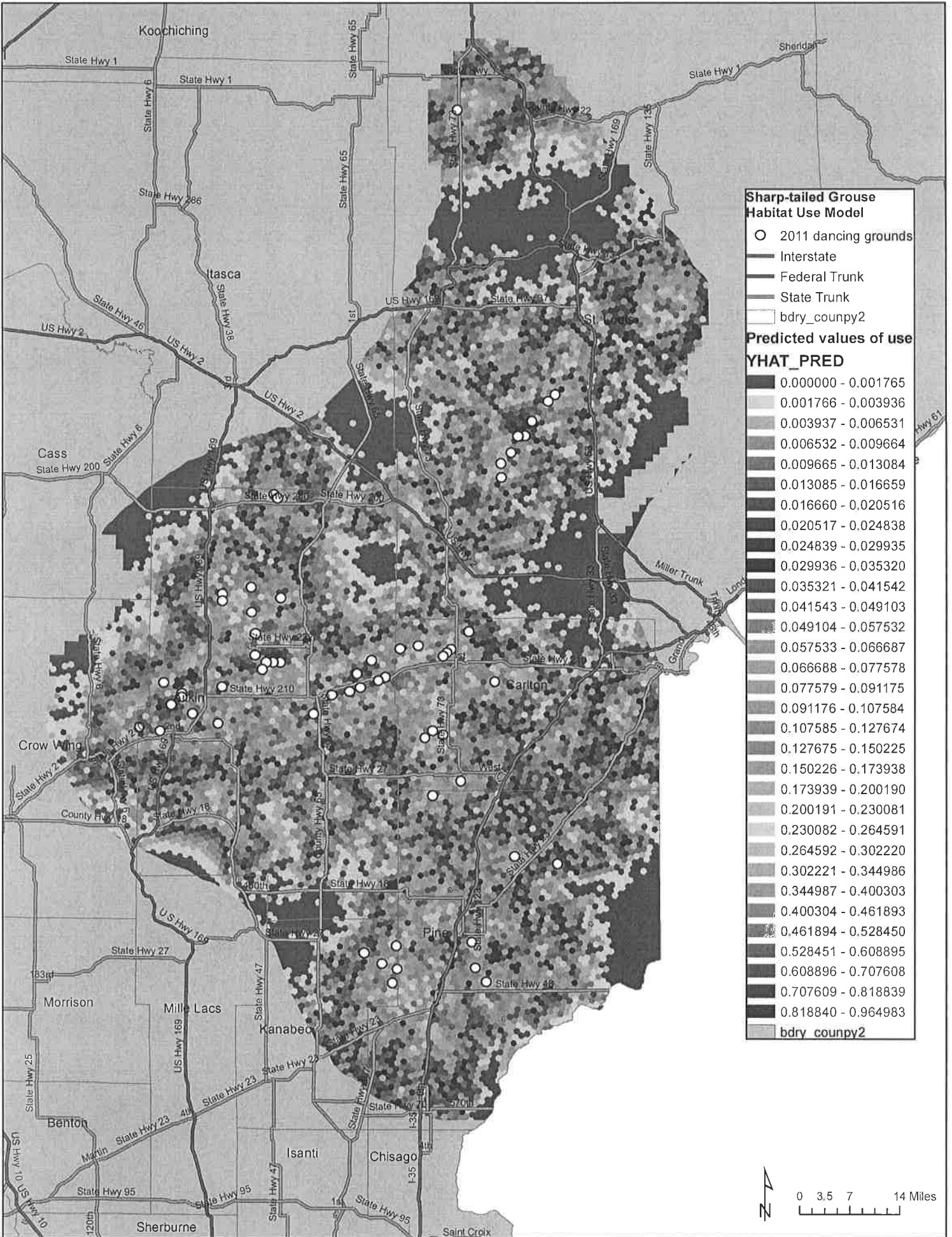
Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	# Bldgs?	Bldg Improve Desc	Value of Bldg	Disposition of Improvements
Thompson	04825204	760	\$2,841,800	5	Old house, shed, hay barn and two grain bins	\$10,000	Remove

Carlton

Name	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	# Bldgs?	Bldg Improve Desc	Value of Bldg	Disposition of Improvements
J. Olson	04920221	280	\$296,400	2	Old house and garage.	\$8,000	Remove

### Section 3 - Other Parcel Activity

No parcels with an other activity type.



# Minnesota Department of Natural Resources

500 Lafayette Road • St. Paul, MN • 55155-40



June 6, 2013

Mr. Joe Pavelko  
Director of Conservation Programs  
Pheasants Forever Inc. and Quail Forever  
7975 Acorn Circle  
Victoria, Minnesota 55386-4562  
jpavelko@pheasantsforever.org

Mr. Ward Julien  
Board Member and Treasurer  
Minnesota Sharp-tailed Grouse Society  
644 - 107 Lane Northwest  
Coon Rapids, Minnesota 55448-4336  
wjulien@peoplepc.com

Dear Messrs. Pavelko and Julien:

I am pleased to write this letter of support on behalf of the Commissioner of the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources. Pheasants Forever and the Minnesota Sharp-tailed Grouse Society's fiscal year 2015 proposal to the Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council for the Northeastern Minnesota Sharp-tailed Grouse Habitat Partnership addresses important brushland habitat protection, restoration, and enhancement needs for sharp-tailed grouse (a species in greatest conservation need) and the suite of wildlife utilizing open land and brushland habitats. Other benefits will include enhancement of the wildlife management system, increased public recreational opportunity, and multiple environmental benefits. Focusing on key, strategic sites will maximize effectiveness of funding resources and past investments in priority brushland habitat complexes. These actions will help maintain the quality of life which Minnesotans deserve.

Thank you for your efforts in conserving important habitats and wildlife. Best wishes with the proposal and continued Northeastern Minnesota Sharp-tailed Grouse Habitat Partnership.

Sincerely,

 **COPY**

Edward K. Boggess, Director  
Division of Fish and Wildlife  
DNR Building – 500 Lafayette Road  
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55155-4020  
651-259-5180

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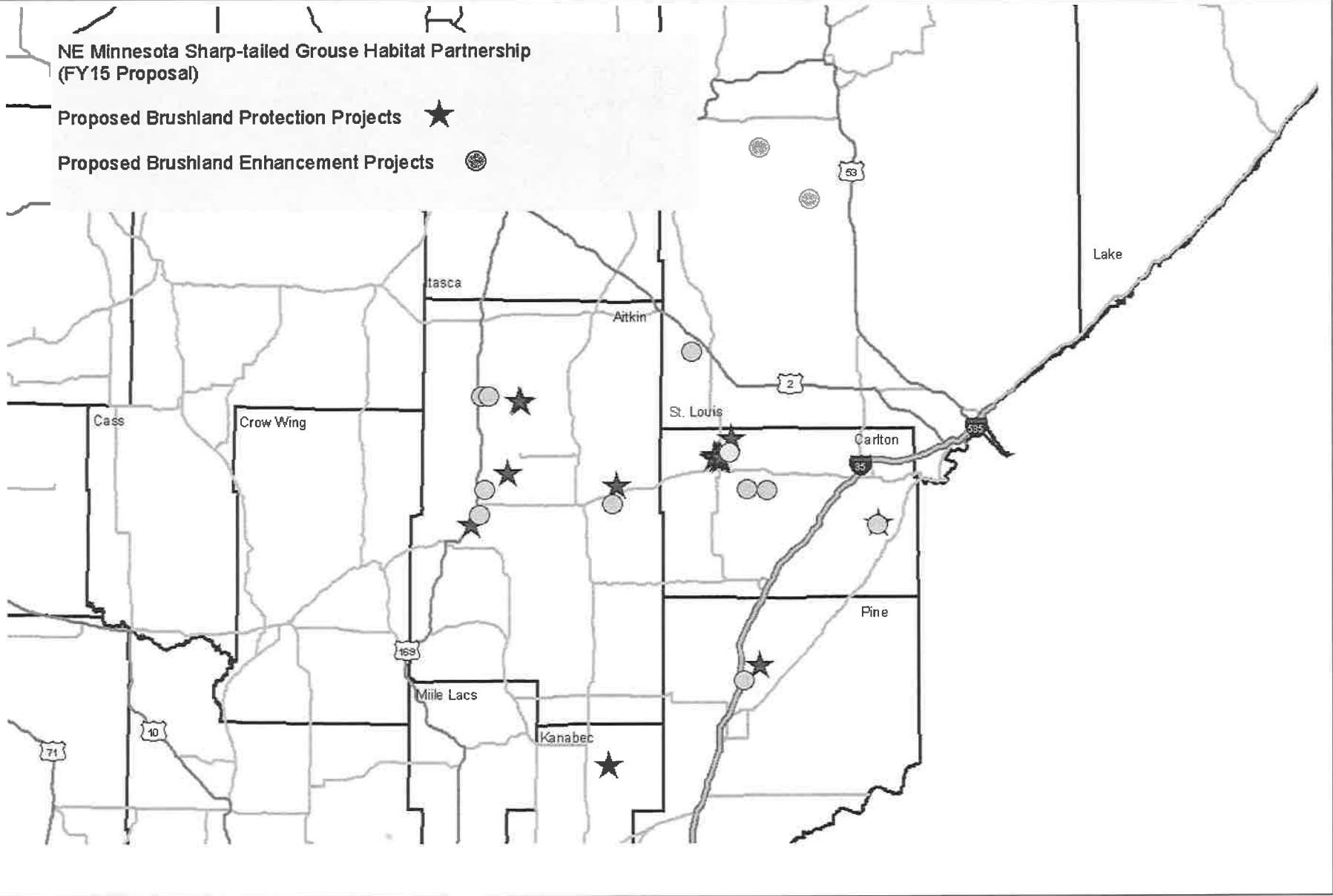


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NE Minnesota Sharp-tailed Grouse Habitat Partnership  
(FY15 Proposal)

Proposed Brushland Protection Projects ★

Proposed Brushland Enhancement Projects ●





## Patrick Wussow

---

**From:** Anne Marcotte  
**Sent:** Friday, September 27, 2013 3:16 PM  
**To:** Patrick Wussow  
**Subject:** Fw: Gun Lake Property

----- Original Message -----

**From:** Bill Becker  
**To:**  
**Cc:** David Hartwell ; Joe Pavelko ; Rick Hansen ; Denny McNamara ; Scott Rall  
**Sent:** Friday, September 27, 2013 3:10 PM  
**Subject:** Gun Lake Property

Here is the information on the land appraised and presumably purchased at \$2.1 million, previously thought to be worth \$700,000. The issue came before the Council as a request to amend two Accomplishment Plans for buying habitat for Sharp-tail Grouse. The purpose of acquiring the land is to provide sufficient habitat for the eastern Minnesota sharp-tailed grouse population. This population is on the brink of genetic collapse. The species needs blocks of suitable habitat in the range of 10,000 acres. The information before the council at its June 4' 2013 meeting is at this link. There is a summary of the request and the two accomplishment plans showing what was being amended. [http://www.lsohc.leg.mn/materials/13\\_Mtg/STG%20Agenda%2011.pdf](http://www.lsohc.leg.mn/materials/13_Mtg/STG%20Agenda%2011.pdf) You should listen to the discussion at this audio link found at 2:56:33 of the audio at this link [http://www.lsohc.leg.mn/media/2013/06\\_04\\_2013.MP3](http://www.lsohc.leg.mn/media/2013/06_04_2013.MP3) Members of the council were convinced the habitat value in the face of genetic collapse of the sharp-tailed population unique to the area and high priced niche market for the land warranted the state paying the price.

I encourage you to listen to the story on why the appraised price has risen so much since the inception of the property. The fact that this property and similar properties in the area were targeted for wetland mitigation needed by mining companies working north of the area. This was the driving force pushing up the value. The highest and best use had changed and the property moved into a higher cost class. The Council approved this request to buy the land with one member voting no.

From the minutes:

**(02:56:33) Action: Approval of Accomplishment Plan Amendment request**

ML 2012, Ch. 264, Art. 1, Sec. 2, Subd. 3c and  
ML 2013, Ch. 137, Art. 1, Sec. 2, Subd. 3c Northeast Minnesota Sharp-tailed Grouse Habitat Partnership. Joe Pavelko

Pheasants Forever, and Jodi Provost, DNR, presented the request and answered questions posed by members. Motion by S. Rall to approve the amendment request as presented.

Bob Anderson yes  
Jim Cox yes  
David Hartwell yes  
Rep. Rick Hansen yes  
Sen. Bill Ingebrigtsen yes  
Jane Kingston yes  
Rep. Denny McNamara no  
Sue Olson abstain  
Scott Rall yes  
Ron Schara yes  
Elizabeth Wilkens yes  
9 -1 Motion adopted

Let me know how you feel about this decision.

Bill Becker,  
Executive Director  
Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council

## Patrick Wussow

---

**From:** Anne Marcotte  
**Sent:** Friday, September 27, 2013 2:19 PM  
**To:** Patrick Wussow  
**Subject:** Fw: Responses to committee questions  
**Attachments:** Attachment E for OHF.pdf; 2013 House Legacy Response Regarding Land Acquisitions with the Outdoor Heritage Fund.pdf

----- Original Message -----

**From:** Bill Becker  
**To:**  
**Cc:** [Sandy Smith](#) ; [Heather Koop](#)  
**Sent:** Friday, September 27, 2013 1:37 PM  
**Subject:** FW: Responses to committee questions

Hi Ann,

I'm glad I hesitated regarding the number of appraisals required on a purchase greater than \$1,000,000. I had it wrong.

In this e-mail near the end is a table showing the number of appraisals, type of appraisals and appraisal reviews (independent, second set of trained eyes) required by the real estate professionals in DNR for anyone buying land with the Outdoor Heritage Fund. For convenience sake I will cut and paste the table here:

### Summary of Attachment E: Land Acquisition Reporting Procedures Summary

Value of Property	Appraisal	Appraisal level & Review
\$20,000 or less	No	No appraisal necessary; must provide documentation of value. Administrative appraisal review by grant recipient.
\$100,000 or less	Yes	Summary appraisal. Administrative appraisal review by grant recipient.
\$500,000 or less	Yes	Administration review by grant recipient.
\$500,000 to \$1,000,000	Yes	One appraisal by DNR certified appraiser. Technical review by DNR-approved reviewer.
\$1,000,000 or more	Yes	One appraisal by DNR certified appraiser. Technical review by DNR appraiser.
\$10,000,000 or more	Yes	Two appraisals. DNR must be involved in writing appraisal scope; technical review by DNR appraiser of both appraisals.

The rules and contract terms for land valued at greater than \$1 million is one appraisal by an appraiser certified by DNR Land and Minerals Division to be sufficiently skilled in appraising to meet the highest of appraisal standards and a technical review by an appraiser who is a DNR employee. The review appraiser makes sure the comps are in order and the adjustments are supported. Also find attached the guiding document summarized by the table, Attachment E as well as a table providing the detail of each parcel of land acquired using the OHF as of February, 2013.

You were frustrated at being unable to see the appraisal before the closing is over. The data classification of appraisals caused by public funding or action starts at this link where you can find the "Landowner Bill of Rights."  
[https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/?id=84.0274&year=2012&keyword\\_type=all&keyword=land+owner+bill+of+rights](https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/?id=84.0274&year=2012&keyword_type=all&keyword=land+owner+bill+of+rights)  
. This statute references the Data Practices Act, to define how to handle appraisal data: <https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/?year=2012&id=13.44#stat.13.44.3> The reference in the Landowner Bil of Rights leads to M.S.13.44, Subdivision 3 reading (**emphasis added**):

**Subd. 3. Real property; appraisal data.**

(a) Confidential or protected nonpublic data. Estimated or appraised values of individual parcels of real property that are made by personnel of a government entity or by independent appraisers acting for a government entity for the purpose of selling or acquiring land through purchase or condemnation are classified as confidential data on individuals or protected nonpublic data.

(b) Private or nonpublic data. Appraised values of individual parcels of real property that are made by appraisers working for fee owners or contract purchasers who have received an offer to purchase their property from a government entity are classified as private data on individuals or nonpublic data.

**(c) Public data. The data made confidential or protected nonpublic under paragraph (a) or made private or nonpublic under paragraph (b) become public upon the occurrence of any of the following:**

**(1) the data are submitted to a court-appointed condemnation commissioner;**

**(2) the data are presented in court in condemnation proceedings; or**

**(3) the negotiating parties enter into an agreement for the purchase and sale of the property.**

**The data made confidential or protected nonpublic under paragraph (a) also become public at the discretion of the government entity, determined by majority vote of the entity's governing body, or, in the case of a state agency, as determined by the commissioner of the agency.**

Pheasants Forever falls under this rule because it is using government personnel to review appraisers and it can be argued the appraiser is acting for the state.

We share your concern about making sure the amount paid for land (or any other expenditure of a large amount of public money) reflects the true value of the property. We think the price must be fair and accurate and the appraisal must protect both the seller and the buyer. As a legislative body the Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council can't operate programs or execute appropriations laws. We are constitutionally prohibited operating programs by the principle of separation of powers. Only executive branch agencies carry out laws. Therefore the legislature appropriates Outdoor Heritage Funds (OHF) to state agencies for their use or for them to "grant" to recipients specified in law who use the money for general public purposes. In this grant administration capacity the state agency sets the rules.

Our OHF appropriations go through DNR, one of two significant land buying agencies in state government. The other one being MnDOT. We've pondered alternatives and haven't come up with a better agency to protect the public interest. DNR employees are duty bound and statutorily directed to make sure the prices are fair. DNR doesn't release the reimbursement until all supporting documentation is in proper order. This includes an appraisal that accurately values real property. The Office of the Legislative Auditor reviews this system and has looked into the appraisal issue specifically. If you have an idea of how to improve the accuracy of these appraisals let us know what it is.

I know it is hard to understand how a parcel of land could be assessed at \$900,000 one day and appraised at over \$2,000,000. I've never seen that happen. I do know assessors, despite the laws and best practice, on occasion grossly miss the value of a parcel in their county. I also know that the price of agricultural land has doubled in some areas of the state in a relatively short time due to crop prices and investor speculation. So it is possible the valuation you refer to and the appraisal are both accurate, for their time.

Sincerely,

Bill Becker  
Executive Director  
Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council  
651-296-6397

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**From:** Bill Becker  
**Sent:** Monday, February 04, 2013 1:42 PM



**To:** 'Mike.Molzahn@house.mn'  
**Cc:** Sandy Smith; Heather Koop  
**Subject:** Responses to committee questions

Mike,

Below are the responses we prepared to questions received by the Lessard-Sams council from members of the Legacy Committee and the Chair of the Environment and Natural Resources Finance Committee. Please distribute to the members of the committees as it pleases the chairs.

The following table answers several questions posed by committee members:

- **How much Outdoor Heritage Funds has been appropriated to local units of government, state agencies, and non-governmental organizations under ML 2009-2012 and how much is recommended in ML 2013?**
- **How much outdoor heritage funding has been appropriated to programs whose work will occur in the seven county metro area?**

	ML 2009	ML 2010	ML 2011	ML 2012	ML 2013 Recommended
Appropriated to LUG	\$4,005,000	\$5,624,000	\$3,758,000	\$15,359,400	\$5,727,000
Appropriated to state agencies	\$65,319,000	\$25,627,000	\$ 43,644,000	\$50,670,600	\$44,480,500
Appropriated to NGOs	\$15,745,000	\$26,913,000	\$38,381,000	\$33,670,000	\$39,789,500
Appropriated to federal agency	\$1,583,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Appropriated to Other*	\$880,000	\$775,000	\$1,172,000	\$220,000	\$1,206,000
<b>Total appropriated</b>	<b>\$87,532,000</b>	<b>\$58,939,000</b>	<b>\$86,955,000</b>	<b>\$99,920,000</b>	<b>\$91,203,000</b>
Appropriated to projects in 7 county metro area	\$5,123,911	\$9,296,740	\$6,679,822	\$11,384,684	\$9,085,000

\*Includes contract administration, LSOHC administration, restoration evaluations.

- **How many acres of native prairie have been or are planned to be acquired under the Outdoor Heritage Fund under ML 2009-2012 and those recommended under ML 2013?**

ACRES OF LAND TO BE ACQUIRED*	ML 2009	ML 2010	ML 2011	ML 2012	ML 2013 Recommended
Amount of native prairie acquired (in acres)	180	1,331	1,338	2,192	1,502
Other prairie & grassland	10,262	6,789	12,724	6,963	1,563
Wetlands	11,454	14,517	11,702	19,347	25,749
Forests	192,006	6,065	41,951	5,560	3,936
Habitat	3,888	8,239	2,910	4,785	28,794

\*Data is not available on the estimated cost of native prairie acquisition.

The *Minnesota Prairie Conservation Plan 2010* calls for the protection of 120,000 acres of unprotected remaining native prairie, the restoration of two million acres of grassland and savanna, and 1.3 million acres of wetlands and shallow lakes. The plan identifies three approaches to prairie region conservation.

- **Core areas with high concentrations of native prairie, other grasslands, wetlands, and shallow lakes.** The goal is acquire lands with a mix of at least 40% grassland and 20% wetland, with the balance in cropland or other uses.
- **Prairie corridors connected to core areas.** The goal is acquired lands within the corridors to be nine miles square and at approximately six mile intervals along and within corridors. The corridor mix of vegetation should be 40% grassland, 20% wetland, with the remainder of the legal land section to be at least 10% in perennial cover.
- **Remainder of the prairie region.** The plan states that the remainder of the prairie region should have at least 10% in perennial native vegetation.

The following table from the "OHF 25 Year Framework" provides additional context to land acquisition discussions. All of the restoration and enhancement activity occurs in the permanently protected habitat

LSOHC Planning Section	Total # acres	Habitat acres	Permanently protected habitat	Private habitat not protected	Dev./Agri
Forest/Prairie Transition	6,560,182	3,522,859	1,085,871	2,436,988	3,037,323
Metro/Urbanizing	3,291,096	1,349,695	408,905	940,790	1,941,401
Northern Forest	23,163,472	20,717,641	12,794,564	7,923,077	2,445,831
Prairie	18,341,600	3,374,386	1,098,640	2,275,746	14,967,214
Southeast Forest	2,647,384	1,056,397	162,256	894,141	1,590,987
<b>Totals</b>	<b>54,003,734</b>	<b>30,020,978</b>	<b>15,550,236</b>	<b>14,470,742</b>	<b>23,982,756</b>

- **How does the state guarantee the best value for acquisitions under the Outdoor Heritage Fund?**

The council relies on the experts in the DNR Division of Lands and Minerals to ensure the Outdoor Heritage Fund pays a fair price for land. Attachment E is DNR policy on valuing land. It is made part of the agreements with non-governmental recipients of state funds and no funds can be reimbursed without proof the land valuation policy was followed. DNR programs are also required to follow the procedures outlined in the attachment. We have attached a copy of attachment E and provide the tabular summary below.

**Summary of Attachment E: Land Acquisition Reporting Procedures Summary**

<b>Value of Property</b>	<b>Appraisal</b>	<b>Appraisal level &amp; Review</b>
\$20,000 or less	No	No appraisal necessary; must provide documentation of value. Administrative appraisal review by grant recipient.
\$100,000 or less	Yes	Summary appraisal. Administrative appraisal review by grant recipient.
\$500,000 or less	Yes	Administration review by grant recipient.
\$500,000 to \$1,000,000	Yes	One appraisal by DNR certified appraiser. Technical review by DNR-approved reviewer.
\$1,000,000 or more	Yes	One appraisal by DNR certified appraiser. Technical review by DNR appraiser.
\$10,000,000 or more	Yes	Two appraisals. DNR must be involved in writing appraisal scope; technical review by DNR appraiser of both appraisals.

- **Please provide a distribution of the average price per acre paid for land or interests in land by recipients of funds from the Outdoor Heritage Fund.**

We have attached a spread sheet of the descriptions of the Fee and Easement acquisitions reported to date. The range of cost per acre is zero (a donation) to \$95,000 per acre (205 feet of shoreline on point extending into Leech Lake). These acquisitions are state priority acquisitions according to DNR. Conspicuously missing are easement acquisitions by the Board of Water and Soil Resources which has been experiencing personnel problems.

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 Cell phone: 612.590.5273

## Attachment E. Land Acquisition Reporting Procedures

### Outdoor Heritage Fund

(April 2012 – replaces December 2011 version)

#### Section 1 – Grant acquisition procedures for all land

##### 1. Valuation/Appraisal

- a. No appraisal is required if the land is valued at \$20,000 or less. However, the grant recipient must provide documentation on how the value was determined.
- b. For all other properties, an appraisal must be prepared by a Certified General Level 4 appraiser licensed in Minnesota.
  - i. The appraisal must be prepared in conformity with the guidelines titled "Uniform Standards of Professional Appraisal Practice" and Minnesota DNR "Supplemental Appraisal and Appraisal Review Guidelines".
  - ii. In order to ensure compliance with the applicable appraisal standards, your written assignment instructions to the appraiser must be included as an addendum of the appraisal report.
  - iii. The appraiser must use the DNR certification form.
  - iv. The DNR must be named as an intended user of the appraisal report.
  - v. The intended use shall include negotiation and grant reimbursement.
  - vi. If the value is less than \$100,000, a summary appraisal report is acceptable.
  - vii. If the value is greater than \$10 million, two appraisals are required and the DNR must be involved in writing the appraisal scope of work to be provided to the appraisers. Contact Cindy Nathan at: [cindy.nathan@state.mn.us](mailto:cindy.nathan@state.mn.us).

##### 2. Appraisal Review

- a. The appraisal review must be prepared in conformity with the "Uniform Standards of Professional Appraisal Practice" and the current Minnesota DNR "Supplemental Appraisal and Appraisal Review Guidelines".
- b. For properties valued up to \$1,000,000, an appraisal review must be conducted by the grant recipient.
  - i. The grant recipient may conduct an administrative review for properties valued up to \$500,000. The grant recipient must use the DNR administrative review checklist. All elements of the checklist must be met.
  - ii. Technical reviews are required for properties valued over \$500,000. The grant recipient shall contract for the appraisal review for properties valued up to \$1,000,000.
    - (a) The grant recipient must use a technical reviewer on the list provided by the DNR.
    - (b) The DNR must be named as an intended user of the appraisal review report.
    - (c) The intended use shall be to assure reliability and credibility of the appraisal for use in reimbursement of grant monies.
    - (d) The reviewer must use the DNR Reviewer Certification form.
    - (e) The appraisal must be recommended.
- c. For properties valued greater than \$1,000,000, the technical appraisal review will be conducted by the DNR.
  - i. The grant recipient must provide the acquisition packet information to Cindy Nathan prior to the review request.
  - ii. The DNR must be named as an intended user of the appraisal review report.
  - iii. The intended use shall be to assure reliability and credibility of the appraisal for use in reimbursement of grant money.

- iv. The acquisition packet and appraisal report (2 copies) shall be submitted to: Cindy Nathan, Minnesota DNR, 1601 Minnesota Drive, Brainerd, MN 56401.
- v. The reviewer must use the DNR Reviewer Certification form.
- vi. The appraisal must be recommended.
- vii. The grant recipient will be mailed the review once it has been completed.

3. Landowner Information

- a. The grant recipient must be working with a willing seller and the landowner must be made aware of the fact that the grant recipient intends to either retain ownership or convey the real property or an interest in the property to a governmental entity.
- b. The grant recipient must disclose any conflict of interests to the landowner.

4. Site Assessment

- a. The grant recipient shall conduct an appropriate site assessment of the real property to determine whether the real property is used or has ever been used for the manufacture, use, storage, or disposal of any hazardous waste or toxic substance, pollutant or contaminants. If contamination is suspected, a Phase 1 review is required. If appropriate based on the findings of the Phase 1, a Phase 2 review is required.
- b. The grant recipient must inspect any buildings and other improvements.
- c. The grant recipient must obtain a completed landowner's disclosure form from the landowner. The completed landowner's disclosure form must be provided to the appraiser and the appraiser reviewer.

5. Legal Description/Marketable Title

- a. The grant recipient must have a real estate professional review the legal description for the property being acquired. When appropriate, the grant recipient shall have the legal description reviewed by a surveyor. The grant recipient must have the property surveyed by a surveyor hired by the grant recipient, if it is needed in order to have a recordable legal description. The surveyor hired by the grant recipient must be licensed in Minnesota.
- b. The grant recipient must obtain marketable title for the property as shown either by a title opinion prepared by an attorney licensed to practice in Minnesota or by title insurance (not just a title commitment). Should a cure be required before transfer to the DNR, the grant recipient is responsible for the cure to title.

6. Reasonable Costs/Accountability of Overall Program

- a. Documentation of all costs is required for reimbursement.
- b. Grant recipients are subject to periodic audits of purchases, appraisals, and appraisal review procedures. DNR's audit team may include financial, appraisal, and legal staff.
- c. Audit findings may alter grant recipients future level of authority to conduct work or receive additional grants.

7. Conveyance to the DNR

- a. If the property is to be conveyed to the DNR, please provide the DNR with the following information that was gathered under these procedures: a copy of the site assessment information, including the disclosure form completed by the landowner from whom you purchased the property; evidence that the County Board was notified of the acquisition; the title information; any survey work; and the deed or, if not yet purchased, the option agreement. The documents are to be provided to the acquisition program coordinator for the division that will administer the property.

- b. If you want to arrange for a closing with the DNR that is close proximity in time to your closing with the landowner from whom you are acquiring the property, please contact the acquisition program coordinator upon obtaining a signed option from the landowner.

A copy of the DNR guidelines, forms, and list of appraiser reviewers can be found at the following location: [http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/lands\\_minerals/appraisal\\_mgmt.html](http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/lands_minerals/appraisal_mgmt.html) .

## **Section 2 – Reporting Requirements, Eligible costs, Conditions for Payment of Eligible Costs:**

### **1. Reporting Requirements and Notice of Funding Restrictions**

- a. The grant recipient must comply with the project requirements and reporting requirements specified in Laws of 2011, 1st Special Session, Chapter 6, Article 1, Section 2, Subdivisions 9 (Project Requirements) and 14 (Real Property Interest Report);
- b. A legal description of the interest in real property covered by the funding agreement;
- c. A reference to the underlying funding agreement; and
- d. The following statement must be referenced in the Notice of Funding Restrictions: *"This interest in real property shall be administered in accordance with the terms, conditions, and purposes of the grant agreement controlling the acquisition of the property. The interest in real property, or any portion of the interest in real property, shall not be sold, transferred, pledged, or otherwise disposed of or further encumbered without obtaining the prior written approval of the Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council or its successor. The ownership of the interest in real property shall transfer to the state if: (1) the holder of the interest in real property fails to comply with the terms and conditions of the grant agreement or accomplishment plan; or (2) restrictions are placed on the land that preclude its use for the intended purpose as specified in the appropriation."*

### **2. Eligible Costs are the Following:**

- a. The value the grant recipient paid for the property up to 110% of the appraised value.
- b. Appraisals and Appraisal Reviews,
- c. Surveys,
- d. Title commitment,
- e. Loan costs for holding the property,
- f. Property taxes paid by the grant recipient from the date of its acquisition,
- g. Attorney fees for the specific acquisition (i.e. title opinion),
- h. Staff time spent on the specific acquisition,
- i. Abstracting, recording fees, and other closing fees, and
- j. Penalty payments made for prepayment of a mortgage or loan.

### **3. Eligible Costs upon Prior Approval are the Following:**

- a. Title insurance,
- b. Site assessments and environmental site inspection phase I and phase II, and
- c. Other due diligence expenses, carrying costs, and transactional costs not listed under 2. Eligible Costs.

### **4. Conditions for Payments of Eligible Costs**

The Recipient may use funds available under this Agreement to cover any costs incurred in following the above land acquisition procedures and as otherwise set out in the Accomplishment Plan attached as Attachment A subject to the following conditions:

- a. The Recipient will not be entitled to use funds available under this Agreement for any land value costs in excess of 110% of the appraised value.
- b. In those instances set out above where DNR review and approval of an appraisal, legal description, title work or environmental assessment is required; the recipient assumes the risk that its costs will not be covered under this agreement if the recipient purchases the real property or interest in real property before receiving the required prior DNR certification or approval.
- c. Eligible costs incurred in the purchase of real property or an interest in real property must be documented by:
  - 1) A copy of the site assessment document.
  - 2) A copy of all appraisal(s) and appraisal review(s).
  - 3) The legal description of the real property or interest in real property purchased and any required survey.
  - 4) Evidence of title as required above or as otherwise agreed to by the Attorney General.
  - 5) Evidence of the amount paid or to be paid for the real property or interest in real property.
  - 6) A copy of the recorded deed or easement language.
  - 7) Evidence of successfully recording a notice of funding restrictions.
  - 8) A copy of a notification to the L-SOHC of the final disposition of the property for reporting purposes.
  - 9) Parties to an easement must specify in the easement (document) all the provisions of their agreement (easement document) that are perpetual; an electronic copy of the terms of an easement acquired must be sent to the L-SOHC and the State. Please send a scanned copy of the signed easement.

Purchases of land or interest in land are eligible for reimbursement upon presentation to the State of items 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 above, plus a fully executed purchase agreement, option exercise letter or similar commitment to purchase showing a closing date. The State will transfer funds to the Recipient no sooner than 10 working days prior to the date of closing. The Recipient will provide items 6, 7, 8 and 9 above to the State no later than 60 days following the receipt of funds, unless otherwise agreed upon by the State. A settlement statement and confirmation of payment from the bank must be provided within 10 days.

Purchaser	Citation	Purchase date	Acquisition Name	Acq. Type	County	Acres	Adjacent Body of Water	Shore Feet	Purchase Price	Prof. Service Costs	Total OHF Project Cost	Appraised Value	Donation or Other Funds	Average OHF Cost Per Acre
MLT	2009 2(f)	12/28/2010	Root River Visger	CE	Houston	145.0	Unnamed	4,136	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$95,000	\$67,416	\$0
MLT	2010 3(a)	12/29/2010	McFarland Lake (Wirth)	CE	Cook	37.0	McFarland Lake	1259	\$0	\$951	\$951	\$353,800	\$353,800	\$26
MLT	2010 3(a)	9/13/2011	Burntside Lake-Miller Island (Smith)	CE	St. Louis	13.0	Burntside Lake	4436	\$0	\$3,311	\$3,311	\$697,500	\$697,500	\$255
TNC	2010 5(i)	3/7/2012	Tallgrass Aspen Parkland - Fitzer	Fee	Kittson	160.0			\$64,000	\$3,391	\$67,391	\$64,000		\$421
TNC	2010 5(i)	4/5/2012	Tallgrass Aspen Parkland - Hewitt	Fee	Kittson	160.0			\$92,000	\$9,501	\$101,501	\$92,000		\$634
TNC	2009 5(a)	4/6/2010	Tallgrass Aspen Steien	Fee	Kittson	239.0			\$145,000	\$5,540	\$151,674	\$145,000		\$635
DNR	2010 3(d)	1/24/2012	Willowssippi WMA tr 6	Fee	Aitkin	81.0			\$42,500	\$9,127	\$51,627	\$42,500		\$637
TNC	2010 2(f)	11/1/2010	Agassiz Beach Ridges/Piche	Fee	Polk	160.0			\$122,400	\$3,084	\$125,484	\$122,400		\$784
DNR	2009 4(a)	12/21/2010	Spencer Brook WMA	Fee	Isanti	235.0			\$191,700	\$15,563	\$207,263	\$610,000	\$368,991	\$882
TNC	2010 2(f)	11/4/2011	Pembina Beach Ridges - Peterson	Fee	Polk	320.0			\$238,500	\$3,840	\$297,308	\$256,000		\$929
MLT	2009 2(f)	6/23/2011	Root River Holen	CE	Houston	224.0	Unnamed	4,890	\$200,000	\$12,283	\$212,283	\$200,000		\$948
DNR	2010 2(a)	9/30/2011	Pembina WMA Parcel 53	Fee	Polk	120.0			\$114,000	\$11,292	\$125,292	\$114,000		\$1,044
DNR	2010 4(c)	11/29/2012	Yaeger Lake WMA tr 2	Fee	Wadena	286.0	Yaeger Lake	7,000	\$315,000	\$11,651	\$326,651	\$350,300	\$35,300	\$1,142
TNC	2010 5(i)	5/11/2011	Pembina Beach Ridges #1	Fee	Polk	160.0			\$128,000	\$42,600	\$196,200	\$128,000		\$1,226
TNC	2010 2(f)	11/1/2012	Pembina Beach Ridges - Piche	Fee	Red Lake	153.0			\$183,564	\$5,725	\$189,289	\$183,564		\$1,237
TNC	2010 2(f)	8/2/2010	Spring Prairie/Landfield	Fee	Clay	470.0			\$602,000	\$5,152	\$607,152	\$611,000	\$9,000	\$1,292
TNC	2010 2(f)	5/4/2012	Bluestem Prairie-Schiauderaff	Fee	Clay	160.4			\$210,000	\$5,029	\$215,029	\$210,000		\$1,340
DU	2009 4(b)	12/4/2009	Kauler 1	CE	Stearns	183.0	Fish Lake	2,324	\$225,453	\$18,610	\$273,763	\$256,000		\$1,496
Cass County	2011 4(c)	9/11/2012	Davenport Property - Hand Lake Property	Fee	Cass	40.2	Lower Hand Lake	1,533	\$59,300	\$900	\$60,200	\$59,300		\$1,498
DNR	2009 2(d)	10/4/2010	Vermillion River WMA	Fee	Dakota	110.0			\$169,000	\$6,060	\$175,060	\$550,000	\$381,940	\$1,591
TNC	2010 2(f)	1/12/2011	Ordway/Galcial Lakes (Luptak)	Fee	Pope	76.0			\$120,500	\$4,325	\$124,825	\$120,500		\$1,642
DNR	2010 3(d)	4/16/2012	Ray Cook WMA tr 5	Fee	Crow Wing	120.0	Cook Lake	2,250	\$180,000	\$22,590	\$203,462	\$180,000	\$872	\$1,696
Pheasants Forever	2009 4(c)	1/5/2011	Pelican Valley WPA (Schleske Tract)	Fee	Otter Tail	160.0			\$274,000	\$2,735	\$276,735	\$288,000		\$1,730
Cass County	2011 2(f)	12/21/2012	Gunderson Property	Fee	Cass	20.0			\$35,000	\$660	\$35,660	\$35,000		\$1,783
TNC	2010 2(f)	12/13/2010	Plover Prairie/Hanson etal	Fee	Lac qui Parle	240.0			\$436,000	\$3,587	\$439,587	\$436,000		\$1,832
Pheasants Forever	2009 4(c)	11/18/2010	Juhlstrud WPA (Thompson Tract)	Fee	Otter Tail	206.0			\$382,000	\$6,801	\$388,601	\$392,000		\$1,886
DNR	2010 5(b)	5/15/2012	Sanborn AMA Parc 1, 2	Fee	Redwood	61.0	Cottonwood River	4,880	\$106,160	\$17,559	\$123,709	\$146,160	\$49,365	\$2,028
Pheasants Forever	2009 4(c)	12/29/2009	Downer Prairie WPA (Ishaug Tract)	Fee	Clay	256.0			\$515,000	\$7,602	\$522,602	\$556,400		\$2,041
DNR	2010 2(a)	10/2/2012	Camp Kerk WMA tr 20	Fee	Swift	40.0	Chippewa River	2,700	\$75,000	\$4,390	\$81,680	\$75,000	\$2,290	\$2,042
TNC	2010 2(f)	9/1/2011	Bluestem-Thompson	Fee	Clay	97.0			\$155,386	\$5,913	\$202,705	\$193,200		\$2,090
DNR	2010 5(b)	8/15/2011	Toad Lake AMA	Fee	Becker	89.0	Toad Lake	3715	\$173,026	\$13,622	\$186,648	\$385,000		\$2,097
Pheasants Forever	2009 4(c)	4/14/2010	Vanmeeteran WPA	Fee	Cottonwood	320.0			\$688,000	\$1,058	\$689,058	\$688,000		\$2,153
DNR	2009 2(d)	11/4/2010	Middle Antelope Valley WMA	Fee	Yellow Medicin	160.0			\$336,000	\$18,810	\$354,810	\$320,000		\$2,218
DNR	2011 5(a)	10/30/2012	Camp Kerk WMA tr 24	Fee	Swift	10.0	Chippewa River	365	\$15,000	\$7,252	\$22,252	\$15,000		\$2,225
DNR	2011 5(a)	10/26/2012	Camp Kerk WMA tr 23	Fee	Swift	41.0	Chippewa River	850	\$81,000	\$11,407	\$92,407	\$81,000		\$2,254
Pheasants Forever	2009 4(c)	11/17/2010	Sacred Heart WPA (Smith Tract)	Fee	Renville	50.0			\$113,250	\$4,367	\$117,617	\$113,250		\$2,352



Purchaser	Citation	Purchase date	Acquisition Name	Acq. Type	County	Acres	Adjacent Body of Water	Shore Feet	Purchase Price	Prof. Service Costs	Total OHF Project Cost	Appraised Value	Donation or Other Funds	Average OHF Cost Per Acre
Pheasants Forever	2009 2(c)	12/18/2009	Verona WMA (Hoffroggee Tract)	Fee	Brown	165.0			\$400,686	\$4,500	\$405,186	\$486,000		\$2,456
Pheasants Forever	2009 2(c)	9/9/2009	Winter WMA Addition (Dubbledee Tract)	Fee	Pipestone	233.0	Flandreau Creek	1,700	\$582,500	\$4,264	\$586,764	\$583,500		\$2,518
Mn Valley NWR Trust	2011 5(d)	9/9/2011	Gross, Blakely 11 and Jessenland 14	Fee	Scott	295.0	Minnesota River	11,551	\$737,500	\$7,376	\$744,876	\$737,500		\$2,529
Mn Valley NWR Trust	2011 5(d)	9/9/2011	Gross, Blakely 11 and Jessenland 14	Fee	Sibley	149.0	Minnesota River	5,834	\$372,525	\$3,726	\$376,251	\$372,500		\$2,529
DNR	2011 5(a)	11/29/2012	West Branch Knife River Parc 13	CE	St. Louis	8.0	W Branch Knife Riv	1,929	\$18,302	\$2,042	\$20,344	\$18,302		\$2,543
	2010 2(b)	3/30/2011	Lamberton WMA Addition # 144930	Fee	Redwood	90.0			\$222,250	\$6,807	\$229,057	\$222,250		\$2,545
DNR	2010 5(g)	8/5/2011	Root River WMA Parcel 12A	Fee	Houston	70.0	unnamed stream	1675	\$184,000	\$9,338	\$193,338	\$184,000		\$2,762
DNR	2009 4(a)	6/25/2012	Becklin Homestead WMA tr 5	Fee	Isanti	85.0	Rum River	6,070	\$100,000	\$14,868	\$249,452	\$224,300	\$134,584	\$2,935
DNR	2011 5(a)	99/99/99	Turtle River Lake AMA Parc 1	Fee	Beltrami	28.0	Turtle River Lake	1,400	\$82,500	\$789	\$83,289	\$82,500	\$3,750	\$2,975
DNR	2010 2(a)	11/9/2012	Cuba WMA tr 3	Fee	Becker	32.0			\$88,000	\$8,990	\$96,990	\$88,000		\$3,031
Cass County	2011 4(c)	7/26/2012	Blood Property - Lake George Property	Fee	Cass	34.0	Lake George	1,475	\$106,000	\$1,120	\$107,120	\$106,000		\$3,151
Pheasants Forever	2009 2(c)	8/25/2010	Younger Brothers WMA (Bergeman Tract)	Fee	Watsonwan	155.0	Watsonwan River	3,500	\$485,000	\$3,551	\$488,551	\$435,000		\$3,152
DNR	2011 5(a)	11/19/2012	Straight River AMA Parc 54	CE	St. Louis	4.0	W Branch Knife Riv	1,118	\$10,317	\$2,406	\$12,724	\$10,317		\$3,181
Southwest Initiative F.	2009 2(b)	4/26/2010	Lamberton WMA #14	Fee	Redwood	114.0			\$360,000	\$11,493	\$371,493	\$360,000		\$3,259
TNC	2011 2(e)	6/11/2012	Chippewa Prairie - Telford	Fee	Swift	240.0			\$712,000	\$36,544	\$784,544	\$816,000		\$3,269
DNR	2010 5(g)	5/25/2012	Mound Prairie WMA tr 3	Fee	Houston	68.0			\$196,330	\$34,345	\$230,675	\$196,330	\$2,616	\$3,392
Pheasants Forever	2009 4(c)	6/4/2010	Runestone WPA (Kensington Tract)	Fee	Douglas	27.0			\$93,700	\$1,382	\$95,082	\$94,200		\$3,522
DNR	2009 5(b)	5/2/2011	Balm Lake AMA	Fee	Beltrami	154.0	Woman Lake	5,845	\$540,000	\$11,638	\$551,638	\$540,000		\$3,582
Redwood Area Com. F.	2010 2(b)	9/16/2011	Granite Prairie WMA #144950	Fee	Renville	194.0	MN River	5808	\$716,505	\$6,807	\$723,312	\$716,505		\$3,728
TPL	2011 2(f)	9/30/2011	Dora Lake WMA	Fee	Le Sueur	510.0	Cannon River	8,659	\$1,920,000	\$3,000	\$1,923,000	\$1,920,000		\$3,771
DNR	2009 5(b)	3/8/2011	Cuyuna Scout Camp	CE	Crow Wing	125.9	Goodrich Lake	4,030	\$467,440	\$22,805	\$490,245	\$1,430,000	\$962,560	\$3,894
DNR	2009 2(d)	2/9/2011	Swan Lake WMA	Fee	Nicolett	80.0			\$310,000	\$8,178	\$318,178	\$310,000	\$1,313	\$3,977
Southwest Initiative F.	2009 2(b)	4/26/2010	Lamberton WMA #13	Fee	Redwood	83.0			\$324,500	\$11,493	\$335,993	\$324,500		\$4,048
Redwood Area Com. F.	2010 2(b)	4/8/2011	Grunflur WMA # 145010	Fee	Cottonwood	164.0			\$657,440	\$6,808	\$664,248	\$657,440		\$4,050
Pheasants Forever	2009 4(c)	8/6/2010	Shaokatan WPA Addition (Kraugh Tract)	Fee	Lincoln	160.0	Lake Shaokatan	blank	\$642,000	\$6,224	\$648,224	\$642,000		\$4,051
DNR	2011 5(a)	6/28/2012	Little Rock Creek AMA	CE	Benton	9.0	Little Rock Creek	3,125	\$36,498	\$294	\$36,792	\$36,498		\$4,088
Pheasants Forever	2009 2(c)	10/7/2010	Clifton/Rolling Hills WMA Addition (Snyder)	Fee	Lyon	334.0			\$1,366,200	\$3,747	\$1,369,947	\$1,366,200		\$4,102
DNR	2011 5(b)	4/2/2012	Hungry Lake AMA Parc 2	Fee	Becker	55.0	Hungry Lake	2,690	\$207,375	\$19,861	\$227,236	\$193,500	\$1,162	\$4,132
Pheasants Forever	2009 2(c)	8/25/2010	Warsaw WMA (Hagen Tract)	Fee	Goodhue	165.0			\$675,000	\$16,748	\$691,748	\$675,000		\$4,225
DNR	2010 5(b)	8/5/2011	Wildcat Creek AMA, P3	CE	Houston	11.0	Wildcat Creek	3450	\$43,031	\$4,157	\$47,188	\$43,031		\$4,290
DNR	2009 2(d)	7/28/2010	Four Corners WMA	Fee	Martin	162.0	Fox Lake	35	\$686,800	\$20,414	\$707,214	\$710,000	\$23,200	\$4,366
DNR	2011 5(a)	99/99/99	Straight River AMA Parc 53	CE	Hubbard	9.0	Straight River	3,050	\$34,663	\$5,555	\$40,219	\$34,663		\$4,469
DNR	2009 5(b)	4/16/2012	Midway River AMA Parc 5	CE	St. Louis	6.0	Midway River	1,936	\$22,868	\$4,475	\$28,712	\$22,868	\$1,370	\$4,785
Pheasants Forever	2009 4(c)	4/1/2011	Felber WPA Addition	Fee	Waseca	42.0			\$208,000	\$4,096	\$212,096	\$208,000		\$5,050
DNR	2010 2(a)	5/21/2012	Talcot Lake WMA tr 13a	Fee	Cottonwood	115.0			\$575,000	\$7,569	\$582,240	\$575,000	\$4,671	\$5,106
DNR	2009 4(a)	12/28/2010	Vermillion River WMA	Fee	Dakota	40.0	Vermillion River	130	\$200,000	\$6,396	\$206,386	\$200,000	\$280	\$5,160

Purchaser	Citation	Purchase date	Acquisition Name	Acq. Type	County	Acres	Adjacent Body of Water	Shore Feet	Purchase Price	Prof. Service Costs	Total OHF Project Cost	Appraised Value	Donation or Other Funds	Average OHF Cost Per Acre
DNR	2010 2(a)	9/10/2012	Talcot Lake WMA tr 34	Fee	Cottonwood	20.0	Clear Lake	2,000	\$91,000	\$12,433	\$103,433	\$83,000		\$5,172
DNR	2009 2(d)	6/11/2010	Swan Lake WMA	Fee	Nicolett	139.0	Swan Lake	7,000	\$709,800	\$28,383	\$740,343	\$717,000	\$3,000	\$5,326
DNR	2011 5(a)	99/99/99	Blagsvedt Creek AMA	CE	Fillmore	9.0	Blagsvedt Creek	2,900	\$44,285	\$6,119	\$50,404	\$44,285		\$5,600
Anoka County	2010 2(e)	9/22/2010	Rum River/Cedar Creek Conservation Area	Fee	Anoka	328.0	Rum River	5940	\$2,600,000	\$0	\$1,900,000	\$3,260,000		\$5,793
DNR	2011 5(a)	8/29/2012	Spring Valley Creek AMA Parc 14	CE	Fillmore	6.0	Spring Valley Creek	1,850	\$29,045	\$8,936	\$34,980	\$29,045		\$5,830
DNR	2009 5(b)	5/24/2010	Bullard Creek AMA	CE	Goodhue	9.0	Bullard Creek	3,200	\$47,512	\$5,384	\$52,896	\$47,512		\$5,877
DNR	2011 5(a)	1/12/2012	Spring Valley Creek AMA Parc 8,11,12,13	CE	Fillmore	11.0	Spring Valley Creek	3,800	\$58,504	\$11,475	\$69,978	\$58,504		\$6,362
DNR	2009 4(a)	12/21/2010	Pelican Lake WMA	Fee	Wright	258.0	Unnamed	1,500	\$1,600,000	\$43,139	\$1,643,139	\$2,065,000	\$467,804	\$6,369
DNR	2009 5(b)	1/9/2012	Lost Creek AMA Parc 2	CE	Fillmore	5.0	Lost Creek	1,675	\$25,384	\$4,367	\$31,969	\$25,384	\$2,218	\$6,394
Pheasants Forever	2009 4(c)	6/28/2012	Timber Lake WPA (Pietz Tract)	Fee	Jackson	59.0	Timber Lake / Teal Lake	blank	\$398,000	\$13,781	\$411,781	\$410,000		\$6,979
Southwest Initiative F.	2009 2(b)	4/26/2010	Lamberton WMA #12	Fee	Redwood	80.0			\$558,500	\$11,493	\$570,013	\$558,500		\$7,125
DNR	2011 5(a)	99/99/99	Straight River AMA Parc 54	CE	Hubbard	3.0	Straight River	1,835	\$14,570	\$9,610	\$24,180	\$14,570		\$8,060
Anoka County	2009 2(g)	3/17/2010	Rum River Cedar Creek	Fee	Anoka	222.0	Rum River	5,940	\$1,900,000	\$0	\$1,900,000	\$1,900,000		\$8,559
Pheasants Forever	2009 4(c)	6/30/2010	Pelican Lake WPA (Weldele Tract)	Fee	Wright	65.0	Pelican Lake	3,250	\$565,250	\$9,771	\$575,021	\$565,250		\$8,846
DNR	2009 2(d)	6/16/2010	Dead Lake WMA	Fee	Otter Tail	115.2	Dead Lake	6,925	\$1,105,000	\$20,153	\$1,125,153	\$1,487,500	\$382,500	\$9,767
DNR	2009 2(d)	9/8/2010	Pelican Lake WMA	Fee	Wright	145.0	Pelican Lake	1,400	\$1,564,200	\$10,088	\$1,574,288	\$1,422,000	\$14,508	\$10,857
TPL	2011 3(b)	10/27/2011	La Salle Lake	Fee	Hubbard	721.0	La Salle Lake	18,600	\$8,490,000		\$8,490,000	\$8,490,000		\$11,775
DNR	2011 5(b)	12/27/2012	East Lost Lake AMA Parc 1	Fee	Ottertail	19.0	East Lost	2,500	\$203,000	\$36,252	\$239,252	\$527,000	\$336,758	\$12,592
DNR	2009 5(b)	6/28/2012	White Earth Lake AMA	Fee	Becker	12.0	Bad Medicine Lake	1,825	\$172,000	\$17,166	\$190,536	\$172,000	\$1,370	\$15,878
DNR	2009 5(b)	6/16/2010	Dead Lake AMA	Fee	Otter Tail	90.3	Dead Lake	14,290	\$726,152	\$3,652	\$1,491,152	\$1,487,500	\$765,000	\$16,513
DNR	2011 5(a)	5/1/2012	Lost Lake AMA	Fee	Cass	4.0	Leech Lake	1700	\$30,000	\$11,956	\$71,956	\$60,000		\$17,989
DNR	2009 5(b)	1/9/2012	Bad Medicine Lake AMA	Fee	Becker	1.0	Bad Medicine Lake	1,505	\$11,500	\$3,980	\$22,689	\$73,500	\$65,209	\$22,689
MLT	2010 5(e)	12/22/2010	Valley Creek (Johnson, T&C)	CE	Washington	17.0	Valley Creek	741	\$389,000	\$7,411	\$515,911	\$508,500	\$119,500	\$30,348
DNR	2009 5(b)	3/10/2011	Bad Medicine Lake AMA	Fee	Becker	2.0	Bad Medicine Lake	1,035	\$70,826	\$5,798	\$76,624	\$548,000	\$434,714	\$38,312
DNR	2010 5(b)	10/13/2011	Cuyuna Scout Camp	Fee	Crow Wing	5.7	Goodrich Lake	700	\$225,000	\$8,046	\$233,046	\$225,000		\$40,834
DNR	2009 5(b)	10/13/2011	Cuyuna Scout Camp	Fee	Crow Wing	0.3	Goodrich Lake	27	\$0	\$11,959	\$11,959	\$0		\$40,834
TPL	2010 5(a)	11/23/2010	Savage Fen SNA - Credit River Addition	Fee	Scott	69.0	Credit River	1180	\$3,000,000	\$0	\$3,000,000	\$3,490,000		\$43,478
DNR	2009 5(b)	1/7/2010	Bemidji Lake AMA	Fee	Beltrami	6.3	Bemidji Lake	1,880	\$400,000	\$0	\$400,000	\$400,000		\$63,492
DNR	2009 5(b)	8/10/2011	Five Mile Point AMA	Fee	Cass	0.2	Leech Lake	10	\$9,384	\$8,898	\$18,282	\$16,625	\$0	\$95,479
DNR	2010 5(b)	8/10/2011	Five Mile Point AMA	Fee	Cass	3.8	Leech Lake	194	\$356,574	\$7,060	\$363,634	\$333,375	\$27,750	\$95,479