



# Outdoor Heritage Fund

## Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council

*"... restore, protect, and enhance Minnesota's wetlands, prairies, forests, and habitat for fish, game, and wildlife. . . "*

### Background

The Outdoor Heritage Fund was established with the passage of the Clean Water, Land and Legacy Constitutional Amendment on November, 2008. The Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council (LSOHC) was formed with the responsibility for providing Outdoor Heritage Fund (OHF) appropriation recommendations to the legislature. The council recommendations must take into consideration the Minnesota Conservation and Preservation Plan findings "directly relating to restoration, protection, and enhancement of wetlands, prairies, forests, and habitat for fish, game, and wildlife, and that prevent forest fragmentation, encourage forest consolidation, and expand restored native prairie. "

### LSOHC Projects

In appropriation years 2009-2014 the council recommended, and the legislature funded, over 170 requests totaling approximately \$540 million.

The council recommends appropriations to the legislature based on the Call for Funding Request that are consistent with constitutional intent and council vision and priorities. The core of the council recommendations focuses on funding programs, rather than individual projects. By funding programs with goals consistent with council priorities, the council seeks to have a measurable long-lasting impact on the environment and fish and wildlife habitat. The types of programs funded to date include land acquisition additions for Wildlife Management Areas (WMA), Aquatic Management Areas (AMA), Scientific and Natural Areas (SNA), and Waterfowl Production Areas (WPA). Restorations and enhancements have been funded in shallow lakes, prairie, trout streams, and state forests.

### Map of Completed Projects

The LSOHC website features an interactive map showing the locations and details about completed OHF projects. It is searchable by appropriation year, project type, county, or legislative district and is continuously updated as projects are finalized.

<http://www.lsohcprojectmgmt.leg.mn/map/>



*A prescribed burn near Cloquet. This 76 year stand of old white pine was burned in late September 2010 after being thinned in the fall of 2009. The objectives were to set back brush competition as well as expose mineral soil for pine regeneration. The desired future stand condition is to decrease the balsam fir, slightly increase the paper birch, white spruce, and black spruce, while maintaining the white pine and Norway pine component. Starting in 2012, these stands are being surveyed for regeneration success (a form of monitoring).*



*Emergent aquatic plants naturally responded to a temporary water level draw-down in 2010 made possible through the water control structure engineered and installed by Ducks Unlimited in the outlet of 225-acre Hurricane Lake (Cottonwood County, MN). The water control structure allows Minnesota DNR wildlife managers to periodically enhance the shallow lake for wetland wildlife. The lake is within a state WMA and is open to public use and recreation.*



*A before (above) and after (below) photo of Hay Creek, provided by Trout Unlimited, taken before and after seeding, mulching and placement of erosion control blanket in 2010. Since restoration, trout numbers have increased dramatically.*



These acquisitions, restorations and enhancements provide nesting areas for waterfowl, upland birds and fish, and small and large game and non-game species. They also provide cover for species to use year round, resulting in healthier fauna and flora. Many programs also enhance water quality.

Recipients include state agencies, nonprofits, and local government units. In many of the programs, partnerships of multiple government units and nonprofits have formed for the betterment of the environment and wildlife habitat, which has increased conservation capacity.

#### Conservation Partners Legacy Grant Program

In addition to the appropriations process, LSOHC is also dedicated to funding a smaller granting program as outlined in MS 97A.056, Subd. 3 (b), "to encourage and support local conservation efforts, the council shall establish a conservation partners program."

The council annually recommends an appropriation to the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources for the Conservation Partners Legacy Program. This appropriation is distributed to conservation and nonprofit partner organizations working in Minnesota through an open competitive grant process. Grants from \$5,000 to \$400,000 are awarded to local, regional, state, and nonprofit organizations, and local government entities. More info can be found at: <http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/grants/habitat/cpl/index.html>.

In appropriation years 2009-2014 the council recommended, and the DNR funded, approximately 265 requests, totaling \$21.3 million in the Conservation Legacy Grant Program.

#### Current Members (as of December 2014)

Robert (Bob) Anderson, Jim Cox, Rep. Rick Hansen, David Hartwell (chair), Sen. Bill Ingebrigtsen, Jane Kingston, Rep. Denny McNamara, Susan Olson, Scott Rall, Sen. Tom Saxhaug, Ron Schara, Elizabeth Wilkens

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