

WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREAS

INDICATOR: Number of acres protected in Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs)

WHY IS THIS INDICATOR IMPORTANT?

DNR acquires and manages Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs) to protect lands and waters that have a high potential for wildlife production, public hunting, trapping, fishing, and other compatible recreational uses. DNR manages more than 1,433 WMAs covering 1.3 million acres of high-quality habitat in 86 of the state's 87 counties. These areas provide recreation for hundreds of thousands of hunters and wildlife watchers each year, who contribute significantly to the state's economy.

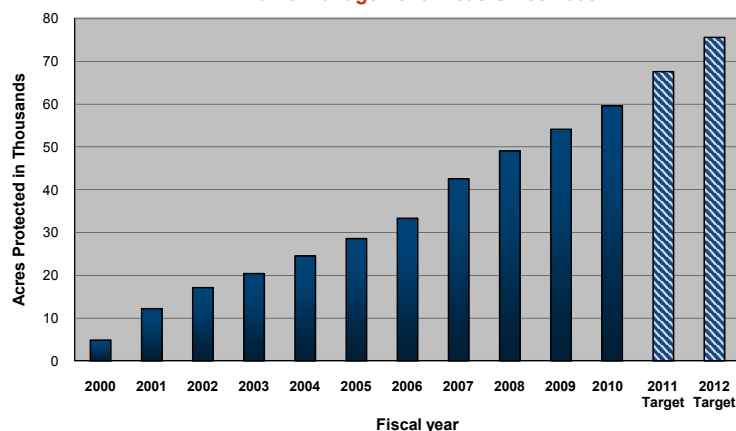
WHAT IS DNR DOING?

Continued management efforts on existing WMA lands and acquisition of new parcels will be critical to maintaining quality wildlife habitat in Minnesota. DNR works with stakeholders to develop and manage a network of WMAs across Minnesota. While most WMAs are in southern and western Minnesota, the overall widespread distribution of these areas ensures that many landscape types are represented. This helps sustain a variety of species and provides different kinds of outdoor recreation opportunities to people throughout the state. DNR provides online information and maps for WMAs, including hunter access trails, disabled access, and habitat types.

TARGET: Acquire 8,000 acres per year during FYs 2011-12. During FY2009-10 DNR acquired 10,547 acres. With the anticipated addition of Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Fund dollars, DNR should meet its goal of 8,000 acres per year.

WMA acquisition efforts need to be accelerated because of development pressure in rural areas and the continuing loss of critical wildlife lands. Furthermore, there is a window of opportunity to purchase land while its price is relatively low. Stakeholders recommended in December 2002 that DNR acquire 21,000 acres per year for the next 10 years, and then acquire 12,250 acres per year for the following 40 years. This goal of adding 700,000 acres to the WMA system included giving priority to acquiring 263,000 acres of private land in-holdings within existing WMA project boundaries.

Cumulative Acres Protected in Wildlife Management Areas Since 2000



Acres protected in Wildlife Management Areas. DNR plans to add 8,000 acres to the WMA system each year during FY 2011-2012.



Minnesota has more than 1,433 public wildlife areas covering 1.3 million acres of habitat.

LEARN MORE ABOUT:

- WMAs at: www.mndnr.gov/wmas/description.html
- Hunting at: www.mndnr.gov/hunting
- Wildlife viewing at: www.mndnr.gov/nature_viewing/wildlife