

**Conservation Partners Legacy Grant Program**  
**Request for Proposal**  
 Traditional and Metro Grant Application Requests

Award Type:	Competitive Grant								
Posted Date:	Monday, July 21, 2014								
Due Date for Applications:	<table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;"><u>Round 1</u></td> <td style="text-align: center;"><u>Round 2*</u></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Open: August 1, 2014</td> <td>December 15, 2014</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Close: September 19, 2014</td> <td>January 30, 2015</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">4:30 pm</td> <td style="text-align: center;">4:30 pm</td> </tr> </table> <p>No late submissions or incomplete applications will be considered for funding.    <i>*Only if funding remains from Round 1.</i></p>	<u>Round 1</u>	<u>Round 2*</u>	Open: August 1, 2014	December 15, 2014	Close: September 19, 2014	January 30, 2015	4:30 pm	4:30 pm
<u>Round 1</u>	<u>Round 2*</u>								
Open: August 1, 2014	December 15, 2014								
Close: September 19, 2014	January 30, 2015								
4:30 pm	4:30 pm								
Application Method:	<a href="#">Online application system</a>								
Eligible Applicants:	Local, regional, state, and national nonprofit organizations, including government entities								
Expected Award Announcement Date:	Round 1: November 24, 2014 Round 2: April 1, 2015								
Project Completion Date:	June 30, 2018								
Estimated Funding This Year:	Traditional: \$3,285,000 Metro: \$3,750,000								
Maximum Award:	\$400,000								
Minimum Award:	\$5,000								
Match Requirement:	10% cash or in-kind match (non-state funds)								
Fund Source:	Outdoor Heritage Fund								
Grant Program Webpage:	<a href="http://www.mndnr.gov/cpl">http://www.mndnr.gov/cpl</a>								
Grant Program Email:	<a href="mailto:LSCPLgrants.DNR@state.mn.us">LSCPLgrants.DNR@state.mn.us</a>								
Grant Program Contact:	<p>Jessica Lee CPL Grant Program Coordinator 651-259-5233</p> <p>Kelly Pharis CPL Natural Resource Specialist 651-259-5174</p> <p>Linda Kelly Administrative Services Section Chief 651-259-5238</p> <p>Division of Fish and Wildlife MN Department of Natural Resources 500 Lafayette Road, Box #20 St. Paul, MN 55155</p>								



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## Grant Program Information

### I. Grant Opportunity Description

#### A. Summary

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) manages the CPL program to provide competitive matching grants from \$5,000 up to \$400,000 to local, regional, state, and national non-profit organizations and government entities. Grants must restore, protect or enhance prairies, wetlands, forests, or habitat for fish, game, or wildlife in Minnesota. A 10 percent match of non-state funds is required for all grants. The match may be cash or in-kind resources. The amount and source of match must be identified at the time of application. Total project costs may not exceed \$575,000.

#### B. Funding Source

Funding for the CPL grant program comes from the Outdoor Heritage Fund (OHF) created by the people of Minnesota. OHF receives 33 percent of the sales tax revenues resulting from the Clean Water, Land, and Legacy Constitutional Amendment passed by the voters in the November 2008 election.

For Fiscal Year 2015, a total of \$4,550,000 was recommended by the Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council (LSOHC) to, and approved by, the 2014 Minnesota Legislature as [ML2014, Ch. 256, Art.1, Sec. 2, Subd. 5\(m\)](#), the Conservation Partners Legacy Grant Program- Phase VI. A total of \$4,000,000 was recommended by the Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council (LSOHC) to, and approved by, the 2014 Minnesota Legislature as [ML2014, Ch. 256, Art.1, Sec. 2, Subd. 5\(n\)](#), the Conservation Partners Legacy Metro Grant Program.

Of these amounts, \$3,285,000 is available for grants through the Traditional grant cycle and \$3,750,000 is available for grants through the Metro grant cycle.

#### C. Program Priorities

Grant activities include the enhancement, restoration, or protection of forests, wetlands, prairies, and habitat for fish, game, or wildlife in Minnesota.

Restoration and enhancement projects will only be funded on lands that are:

- permanently protected by a conservation easement as defined in [MN Statutes 84C.01](#);
- in public ownership; or
- public waters as defined in [MN Statutes, Section 103G.005, subdivision 15](#).

Acquisitions will protect wetlands, prairies, forests, and habitat for fish, game, and wildlife by acquiring land through fee title or permanent conservation easement.

- Lands acquired in fee title must be open to the public for hunting and fishing during all open seasons unless otherwise provided by state law.

#### D. Funding Cycles

Traditional (Statewide): \$3,285,000

- Up to 2 funding cycles

Metro: \$3,750,000

- Up to 2 funding cycles

- Projects must be located within the 7- county metro area or within city limits of cities with a population of 50,000 or greater (Duluth, Rochester, St. Cloud)

Expedited Conservation Projects (ECP): \$1,000,000

- Projects must meet certain criteria ([www.mndnr.gov/ecp](http://www.mndnr.gov/ecp))
- Open continuously through mid-May, or until funds run out, whichever comes first

All information within this RFP applies to the Traditional and Metro grant cycles. A separate RFP is available for the ECP grant cycle.

For the Traditional and Metro cycles, applicants will have the option to request over \$25,000 (O25K) or under \$25,000 (U25K). The U25K application is simplified application and may only be used for restoration and enhancement projects (acquisition projects must use the O25K application). Applicants may request from \$5,000 up to \$400,000; the total project cost may not exceed \$575,000. A 10% match of non-state funds is required.

If more than \$1 million remains after the first Traditional and/or Metro grant rounds, a second grant round will be offered. If less than \$1 million remains, these funds will be available for the continuous ECP grant cycle for projects that meet the criteria.

All applications must be submitted online at [https://webapps8.dnr.state.mn.us/cpl\\_grant\\_applications/authentication](https://webapps8.dnr.state.mn.us/cpl_grant_applications/authentication). See the Application and Grant Award Information Section of this RFP for more details. There is no limit to the number of applications that can be submitted through the CPL Grant Program.

#### **E. Eligible Applicants**

Only nonprofit organizations and government entities are eligible for CPL funding. Private individuals and for-profit organizations may not apply. Partnerships are encouraged.

State Grant Policy 08-13, [Grant Closeout Evaluation](#), requires State agencies to consider a grant applicant's performance on prior grants from that agency before making a new grant award of over \$5,000. Applicants who performed poorly on prior grants may not be funded or only allowed to work on small, approved projects.

#### **F. Grants and Public Information**

Under [MN Statutes 13.599](#), responses to a RFP are nonpublic until the application deadline is reached. At that time, the name and address of the applicant and the amount requested becomes public data. After the application evaluation process is completed, all application data (except trade secret data) becomes public. Data created during the evaluation process is nonpublic until the negotiation of the grant agreement with the selected grantee(s) is completed. Sensitive information, such as Natural Heritage Database review information, will remain nonpublic.

[MN Statutes 13.44](#) categorizes estimated or appraised value of real property prior to purchase and sale as confidential data on individuals, or protected nonpublic data. Once property transactions are completed, the location and landowner information will become public information. See the [Minnesota Government Data Privacy Act](#) for more information.

## II. Program Information

### A. Grant Funds

A total of \$3,285,000 is available in state fiscal year 2015 (July 1, 2014- June 30, 2015) for the Traditional grant cycle and \$3,750,000 is available for the Metro grant cycle.

1. The DNR reserves the right to vary the amounts awarded in each of the grant categories.
2. If remaining funds exceed \$1 million after the first grant round, a second grant round will be offered. If less than \$1 million remains, these funds will be available for the ECP grant cycle for projects meeting the criteria.
3. The DNR reserves the right to award less than the total amount available if suitable projects are not submitted.
4. The DNR reserves the right to make additional awards under this announcement, consistent with DNR and Outdoor Heritage Council recommendations and guidance, if additional funding becomes available, a project comes in under or over budget, or if a grantee cannot carry out their project as planned.
5. The DNR reserves the right to award amounts less than that requested in an application should it be determined that aspects of a project are not desirable, cost-effective, or eligible for funding.
6. Grant funds will be awarded to only one eligible organization (the “Grantee”) per grant. The Grantee is responsible for the proper expenditure of funds, on-the-ground accomplishments, reporting, and meeting all program and legal requirements.

### B. Match Information

#### 1. Minimum Requirements

This program requires a match of 10 percent non-state funds for all grants. The match may be cash or in-kind resources. Funds used for match for CPL grants cannot be used as match for any other state grant programs.

Match funds are generally subject to the same requirements as grant funds, unless specifically listed. Documentation of all match funds is required. Match can come from a variety of public (non-state origin) and private sources, and can include [in-kind goods and services and volunteer labor](#). Match funds are subject to audit.

#### 2. Partnerships

Applicants are encouraged to combine contributions from non-state partners to meet the match requirement. One eligible applicant must lead the partnership effort and assume program and financial responsibility for all work in the application. Successful applicants should be prepared to carefully document matching contributions, including the number of volunteers and volunteer hours on individual projects.

Match funds must be supported with letters of commitment. A sample letter is available on the [How to Apply](#) webpage. Letters of commitment should:

- a. Be written on the contributing organization’s letterhead
- b. Identify the applicant and name of the project
- c. Identify the amount and source of funding they are committing
- e. Describe any time constraints or other contingencies with the funding commitment
- g. Be signed by member(s) of the contributing organization with authority to commit the organization to the match

### 3. Determining Required Match

The match may be cash or in-kind resources. The match amount is determined by multiplying the grant amount requested by the total match requirement. The DNR will use the following formulas:

$$\text{Total Grant Requested (\$)} \times 0.10 = \text{Minimum Match Required}$$

**Cash Match** is actual cash contributed to a project, such as:

- Cash contributed by your organization
- Cash contributed by a third party that is supported by a Partner Commitment Letter and documented in the grantee's files
- Supplies or contracted services (not grantee staff time) to be paid for by the grantee for project activities during the grant period;

**In-kind Match** is non-cash donations of a good or service, such as

- Personnel time given to the project (existing staff or volunteers)
- Use of equipment
- Donated supplies or services

All match funds must:

- a. Be reasonable, necessary, and allowable for the performance of the grant award
- b. Conform to grant program guidelines, including project dates
- c. Be provided for in the approved budget
- d. Be treated consistently with other costs incurred by the organization
- e. Be in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP)
- f. Be adequately documented (i.e., are verifiable from the grantees records and reported to the grant program as requested)

### 4. Additional Funding

Some large projects involve multiple funding sources that may not be eligible as match for this grant. Keep these amounts separate. There is an "Additional Funding" box in the application that can be used to list the additional funding sources and amounts. Total project cost (grant + match + additional funds) may not exceed \$575,000.

## C. General Program Requirements

This program is funded by state dollars and requires a significant amount of documentation and transparency. All expenditures and work completed with these funds must adhere to the following:

### 1. Laws, Regulations, Policies and Codes

Applicants must follow Federal, State, and local laws, regulations, policies, and codes, as applicable. Projects must meet the requirements set out by [ML2014, Ch. 256, Art. 1, Sec. 2, Subd. 5\(m\) and 5\(n\)](#) and [MS 97A.056](#). Projects on public lands, and any project receiving state funds, may require more approvals and/or permits than other projects. It is the applicants' responsibility to obtain all required approvals and permits. Applicants must coordinate this with public Land Managers, Easement Holders, and/or private landowner(s) before any work begins.

## **2. Commissioner's Approval**

The Commissioner of Natural Resources must approve all projects. All projects must conform to the [MN Statewide Conservation and Preservation Plan](#). Wildlife projects must conform to the [State Wildlife Action Plan](#).

## **3. Grantee's Duties**

Grantees must be willing and able to perform all work required to complete the projects they are requesting funds for. This includes managing any bid, contract or purchasing process necessary to complete work under the grant. The grantee is also responsible for project oversight and management. DNR or other public Land Managers or Easement Holders may provide technical guidance to the grantee, but are not responsible for the work. Grantees are also responsible for understanding and following all program requirements and procedures.

## **4. Conflict of Interest**

State Grant Policy 08-01, [Conflict of Interest for State Grant-making](#), also applies to grantees. Please review and follow this policy to ensure there are no conflicts of interest. Applications may be rejected or grants cancelled if conflicts are found and not resolved to the State's satisfaction. Grantees' conflicts of interest are generally considered organizational conflicts of interest. Organizational conflicts of interest occur when:

- a. A grantee is unable or potentially unable to render impartial assistance or advice to the State due to competing duties or loyalties;
- b. A grantee's objectivity in carrying out the grant is or might be otherwise impaired due to competing duties or loyalties; and/or;
- c. A grantee or potential grantee has an unfair competitive advantage through being furnished unauthorized proprietary information or source selection information that is not available to all competitors.

An organization's Conflict of Interest policy must be followed when selecting contractors. If no policy exists, the grantee must document that a fair process was used.

## **III. Eligibility Information**

### **A. Ineligible Applications**

The following applications will not be considered eligible under this RFP and will be disqualified:

1. Applications requesting less than \$5,000 or greater than \$400,000.
2. Applications for projects that have a total project cost exceeding \$575,000.
3. Applications to fund activities on conservation easements that are the responsibilities of landowners under the terms of the easement.
4. Applications that do not meet the requirements set out in [ML2014, Ch. 256, Art. 1, Sec. 2, Subd. 5\(m\) and 5\(n\)](#) and [MS 97A.056](#).
5. Applications that include:
  - a. Activities that constitute legally required mitigation for the adverse effects of an activity regulated or otherwise governed by local, state or federal law.
  - b. Activities that constitute restoration for natural resource damages under federal, state or local law.
  - c. Activities that constitute complying with a biological opinion under Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act.

- d. Activities that are required by a separate consent decree, court order, statute, or regulation.
6. Projects that are currently receiving direct appropriations from the Outdoor Heritage Fund, or that were submitted during FY2016 Call for Funding by the LSOHC (if the applicant pulls their project from consideration of OHF funding prior to the CPL application deadline, then they may apply for CPL funding).
7. Previously funded CPL projects that are in active grant status.
8. If an application requests funding for ineligible activities, or uses ineligible activities as match, the ineligible activities will not be considered and may result in the rejection of the entire proposal.
9. Applications which are not complete at time of application deadline. No late submissions will be accepted. Applications are considered incomplete if:
  - a. The Land Manager Review and Approval form(s) is missing, incomplete, or unsigned.
  - c. Any required financial documentation is missing.
  - d. The match amount does not meet requirements.

## **B. Eligible Expenses**

Eligible expenses are expenses (contracts, supplies and materials, salaries, etc.) directly incurred through project activities that are direct to and necessary for the project described in the application. These expenses must be specified in the application and documented during the grant period as specified in the [Payment Manual](#). Generally, if an expense is eligible as a grant cost, it is eligible as a match cost. Some costs have limits to the amount that will be paid from grant funds; any costs above that amount may be eligible as match.

All grant and match expenses must occur within the project period except for pre-award match costs, described below. The grant period begins when the final signature on the grant contract is obtained and continues until all work is completed but no later than June 30, 2018 for FY15 funds.

### **1. Grant Administration**

Up to 2.5 percent of the total grant funds requested may be used for grant administration and must be specified in the application and Work Plan. Grant administration costs may be paid for with grant or match funds (in-kind only). This includes staff salary, FICA, and benefits for work and direct costs required to administer the grant. Grant administration costs apply to individuals within the organization that are applying for the grant and cover all work in regards to the administration of the grant after grant funds are awarded.

### **2. Personnel Costs**

Up to 5 percent of the total grant funds requested may be used for project management/non-grant administration directly related to and necessary for on-the-ground work. Costs over 5 percent may be used to meet in-kind match requirements. Personnel costs apply to individuals within the organization applying for the grant, for all work completed outside of grant administration.

### **3. Travel**

Transportation and travel expenses, such as lodging, meals, and mileage of personnel directly working on the grant, are eligible expenses (grant or match) in the same manner and in no greater amount than provided for in the current [Commissioner's Plan](#). Travel expenses shall not exceed 1 percent of the total grant funds requested, unless justified and approved by

CPL grant staff in the Work Plan. Travel and subsistence expenses incurred outside of Minnesota are not eligible expenses unless CPL staff has given written approval.

**4. Permitting and Environmental Compliance Expenses**

Costs associated with permitting and compliance requirements may be included within the grant budget. These costs should be listed within the Additional Budget Items line of the budget and explained in the details section. Grant or match funds can be used to pay for these costs. The grantee is responsible for meeting all compliance requirements and obtaining any necessary permits.

**5. Acquisition Costs**

Each tract must be approved for acquisition in the Work Plan. Costs related to tracts that are not in the Work Plan are ineligible for payment. Any obligation to purchase property made before the grant agreement is executed is made at the grantee's risk.

Eligible acquisition costs include:

- a. Appraisal fees
- b. Appraisal review fees
- c. Acquisition negotiations
- d. Acquisition legal costs
- e. Deed fees
- f. Boundary surveys
- g. Initial development costs
- h. Travel and transportation
- i. Cost of the property being acquired

**6. Donation of Value for Acquisitions**

A *donation of value* means a landowner receives less than the appraised value of the land. The difference between the appraised value and the amount the landowner receives is donated as cash match towards the grant. The donation may be only part of the difference (also referred to as a *bargain sale*), or the entire amount. Any difference between the amount paid to the seller and the appraised value must be reported to CPL staff.

**7. Pre-award Match Costs**

Pre-award costs are costs incurred before the grant agreement is executed. No pre-award costs are eligible for reimbursement; however, the following pre-award costs may count towards match:

- a. Insurance: Insurance costs for CPL projects are eligible only if incurred after the grantee has been formally notified that they have been awarded a grant, but before the grant is in place.
- b. Appraisals: Appraisal fees that were incurred less than 12 months prior to the application deadline are eligible match costs. The appraisal must be for the property specified in the grant application, and must meet all requirements in the [Land Acquisition Procedures documents](#).
- c. Engineering and Design: Site specific engineering and design costs that were incurred within 18 months of the application deadline are eligible for match. Engineering and design documents must be submitted as uploads to the application.

All pre-award costs are incurred at the applicant's risk and must be specified as match at time of application. No reimbursements will be made to unsuccessful applicants.

### **C. Ineligible Expenses**

Indirect costs (overhead costs for basic operational functions such as lights, office rent, water, phone) are not eligible grant or match expenditures. See the [Eligible and Ineligible Expenses](#) document for further details.

Below are some common requests for funding that the CPL program will NOT fund with grant dollars or allow as match (unless specified). These requests will be removed from any application prior to review and may result in the rejection of the entire application.

- Work on project sites not identified and approved in the Work Plan
- Engineering and Design Costs. Grant funds may not be used to pay for engineering and design costs for any activity. Engineering and design work must be substantially complete before requesting grant funds for a project. CPL staff may request engineering and design plans from applicants during the review process to validate cost estimates and ensure the project will be completed within the allowed timeline. These costs are eligible to be used as match, as outlined in the Pre-Award Match costs section above.
- Research
- Education activities
- Planning/Plan Development
- Capital Equipment including but not limited to vehicles, trailers, chainsaws, sprayers, seed drills, mowers, etc.

## **Application and Grant Award Information**

### **I. Application Information**

#### **A. Online Application System**

Complete application information, including the required and optional forms, instructions, and the application system link can be found on the [Traditional](#), [Metro](#), or [How to Apply](#) webpages. All grant applications must be submitted using the online [application system](#). Applicants must create an account and password the first time they access the system for any funding cycle through CPL. The system allows applicants to save their application at any point and return to it as many times as needed before submitting.

#### **B. Funding Categories**

After logging into the application system, applicants must choose which grant funds they are requesting. Applicants should choose the Metro application if their project is located in the 7-county metropolitan area (Anoka, Carver, Dakota, Hennepin, Ramsey, Scott, and Washington Counties) or within the city limits of Duluth, Rochester, and St. Cloud.

Requests for \$25,001 or over will be directed to the standard application; requests for \$25,000 or under will use a simplified application.

#### **C. Completing the Application**

- A valid email address for the project manager and fiscal contact is required.
- Each project site must be mapped using the online mapping system.

- Each application must submit a completed (including Natural Heritage Database Review section) [Land Manager Review and Approval Form](#), signed by the Land Manager or Easement Holder and uploaded electronically to the application.
  - For work on private lands, easement information must be uploaded
- Projects occurring within public waters must also submit a [Public Waters Project Form](#) in addition to the Land Manager Review and Approval Form.
- Other supporting documents or photos will need to be uploaded to the system based on the project and level of funding requested. Supporting documents can be found on the [How to Apply](#) page of the CPL website.

Applicants are responsible for the content of their application. It is the applicant's responsibilities to ensure that all forms are completed, signed and uploaded. No late submission of forms will be accepted. Applications with missing forms will be considered incomplete.

#### **D. Natural Heritage Database Review**

The Natural Heritage Database Review section must be completed on all Land Manager Review and Approval Forms in order for an application to be considered complete. If the Land Manager or Easement Holder cannot access the Natural Heritage Database, they must contact CPL Grant Staff for assistance at least 10 days prior to the application deadline. CPL staff will complete the review and return the information to the Land Manager or Easement Holder as a letter in PDF form. The applicant must upload this letter in addition to the Land Manager Review and Approval Form. The letter should be uploaded as a Supplemental Document in the Attachments page of the application.

#### **E. What Not To Submit**

Do not submit extra or unsolicited material, such as pamphlets, business cards, etc. Do not embed these items in any of the required documents that you upload. Such material will be removed from the application and will not be sent to reviewers. Should any of this information be needed, CPL staff will request it from the applicant.

#### **F. Submitting the Application**

After all sections are complete, applicants must click the Submit Application button on the Application Submission page to submit the application. Once submitted, no changes can be made to the application, although the complete application can be reviewed and printed. Grant staff has limited ability to make changes to the application (correcting typos, changing contact information, etc.). Replacing large amounts of text or swapping uploaded documents is not possible. Any changes requested after the application deadline will not be accommodated.

#### **G. Application Deadlines**

Applications for Round 1 of the Traditional and Metro grant cycle will be accepted from August 1 until September 19, 2014 at 4:30 pm, CST. Grants will be selected by November 24, 2014.

If funding remains, Round 2 will open on December 15, 2014 and close on January 30, 2015 at 4:30pm, CST. Grants will be selected by April 1, 2015.

#### **H. Application Status**

The DNR will notify all applicants of their status via email in November 2014 for the first round of grants and by April 2015 for the second round of grants, if applicable. This notification is not an authorization to begin work.

## II. Application Review Information

### A. Evaluation Criteria and Scoring

The [Evaluation Criteria](#) used to evaluate grant applications has been developed by the MN Legislature, LSOHC, Office of Grants Management, and CPL Staff. Applicants should review the Evaluation Criteria Table found at the end of this document to make sure all the information needed to evaluate their application on each criteria is included. Applications will be scored on all 6 criteria found in the table.

### B. Review and Selection Process

#### 1. Initial Review

An application must pass all Initial Review criteria in order for it to be considered. Applications that do not pass the initial review are considered ineligible. CPL staff will review applications to ensure that:

- The applicant meets the eligibility requirements for the program and grant cycle
- The application meets the requirements of the RFP, including submission of all required forms
- The match requirements are met
- The project can be accomplished within the grant period, with measurable accomplishments annually

#### 2. Financial Review of Nongovernmental Organizations—Requests Over \$25,000

The [State Grant Policy 08-06](#), Financial Review of Nongovernmental Organizations, requires that before awarding a grant of **over \$25,000** to a nongovernmental organization, Minnesota state agencies must assess a recent financial statement from that organization. Organizations submitting an application for over \$25,000 will be required to submit financial documentation at that time. Items of significant concern must be discussed with the grant applicant and resolved to the satisfaction of state agency staff before a grant is awarded. Financial documentation required is based on annual income:

- a. Grant applicants with annual income of under \$50,000, or who have not been in existence long enough to have a completed IRS Form 990 or a certified financial audit must submit their most recent board-reviewed financial statements.
- b. Grant applicants with annual income of over \$50,000 and under \$750,000 must submit their most recent IRS Form 990.
- c. Grant applicants with annual income of over \$750,000 must submit their most recent certified financial audit.

Applicants will be prompted to upload these documents to the application system on the Attachments page before any application over \$25,000 is submitted. Financial review is completed by CPL Staff during the initial review process.

#### 3. Technical Review

Technical review of applications will be performed by Technical Review Committee(s) (TRC) made up of experts in each of the habitat types and by DNR Regional Managers. TRC committees may include representatives from DNR, BWSR, the US Fish and Wildlife Service, and other appropriate members from both government and non-profit organizations. The TRC will score each application based on the [Evaluation Criteria](#). Grant funding recommendations based on TRC outcomes will be forwarded for Division Directors Review.

#### **4. Division Director Review**

The Division Director (DD) review will be performed by the CFO, and DDs of the DNR's Fish and Wildlife, Ecological and Water Resources, and Forestry Divisions. This review will recommend funding levels and make final recommendations to the DNR Commissioner based on the following factors:

- a. TRC scores, comments, and recommendations
- b. DNR Regional Director comments
- c. Public agency's ability and/or readiness to support proposed project activities
- d. Applicants ability to successfully complete work
- e. Geographic distribution of funding

#### **5. Final Approval**

The Commissioner of the Department of Natural Resources will make final approval on all projects to be funded based on all information provided by the Technical Review Committee(s), Regional Managers and Division Directors. The DNR reserves the right to reject any and all applications which do not meet the requirements of this RFP or are outside the scope of the Conservation Partners Legacy Grant Program.

### **C. Unfunded Applications**

Applicants with ineligible or incomplete applications will be notified of such at the time the awards are announced. All applicants not awarded funding will be given the opportunity to have their applications reactivated, which will make them editable again should funding remain for a second grant round. Applications will then need to be resubmitted after editing to be considered during the review process of the upcoming funding round. Applications cannot be transferred between application cycles.

### **D. Unawarded Funds**

If more than \$1 million remains after the first Traditional and Metro grant rounds, a second grant round will be offered. Applications deemed eligible and complete but not funded during Round 1 may request the opportunity to edit their application before the Round 2 deadline. If less than \$1 million remains after the first grant round, these funds will be dedicated towards the continuous ECP grant cycle for projects meeting the criteria.

Any unawarded funds remaining after Round 2 of funding will be made available to the ECP grant cycle. Any unawarded funding from ECP after the 5<sup>th</sup> funding round in May, 2015, will be rolled into available funds for FY16 CPL grants.

## **III. Award Administration Information**

### **A. Anticipated Award Dates**

It is anticipated that the recipients of the first round of CPL grants will be announced by November 24, 2014. The recipients of the second round of CPL grants (if necessary) will be announced by April 1, 2015.

### **B. Grant Award Information**

All grants will be awarded using a grant agreement. The grant agreement is the legal document containing the project description, budget, and other requirements. This is considered a contract between the award recipient and the State of MN.

### **C. Executing the Grant Agreement**

Each grant agreement requires a minimum of three signatures, signed in this order:

1. State Encumbrance Verification by a DNR staff member who verifies that the grant funds have been encumbered.
2. Grantee Signature by the member(s) of the grantees' organization who have the authority to sign legal documents on behalf of the organization.
3. State Agency by a DNR Division Director or other staff with delegated authority to approve the grant and expenditure of state funds.

The grant agreement is "executed" when all the above signatures have been obtained.

Work may not begin until the grant agreement is executed. Do not plan to start work until 2 months after the grant award announcement *at the earliest*. The agreement process moves at the speed set by the award recipient (grantee) as all requirements must be submitted by the grantee before execution of the agreement.

### **D. Start Date**

The grant agreement must be executed before work may begin. The grantee will be required to submit insurance information, Work Plan approval, and evidence of CCM contact before the grant agreement can be executed. These requirements will be requested after award notification, and must be met within 60 days or CPL staff reserves the right to cancel the grant award. The time required to set up the grant agreement is largely dependent on how quickly the grantee responds to these requirements. On average, it takes 2-3 months before the grant agreement is executed and work can begin.

### **E. Grant Period**

The grant period (also referred to as the project period) starts when the grant agreement is "executed," meaning all required signatures have been obtained. Work that occurs before this date is not eligible for reimbursement with grant funds, and cannot be used as match, with the exception of the Pre-Award Costs outlined in this RFP.

The end date of a grant period is determined by the appropriation language. Projects funded with FY15 funds must be completed by June 30, 2018. All work must be completed and final products delivered by the grant expiration date.

### **F. Changes to the Application, Work Plan, or Grant Agreement**

Any changes to the approved application must be submitted to and approved by CPL Grant Staff before the grant agreement is signed and work begins. The application is called the "Work Plan" after the project is funded, and is incorporated into the grant agreement. Changes that are significant enough to alter the Work Plan beyond scope of the originally approved application are not allowed.

Minor changes to the Work Plan, such as dropping or adding project sites, and modifying the timeline, can be made by requesting the change in writing from CPL Staff prior to the change. Any new project site will need a [Land Manager Review and Approval Form](#) completed, including a map and Natural Heritage Review.

Major changes may need a formal amendment. Contact [CPL Grant Staff](#) as soon as possible when changes are expected, and prior to doing any work. Any amendment(s) to the original grant agreement must be in writing and will not be effective until the amendment has been

signed and approved by the same parties who executed and approved the original agreement, or their successors in office.

## **G. Volunteers and Contractors**

### **1. Volunteers**

Volunteers are individuals or groups who perform work described in the grant and are not paid for their time by any agency, grant or organization. Volunteers working on DNR lands must [register as DNR volunteers](#) and are then covered by DNR's Worker's Compensation Insurance. Forms are available from the DNR Land Manager or on the [Grantee Information](#) webpage. Volunteers working on other public lands must follow the volunteer guidelines for the agency that manages the land. Work performed by unregistered volunteers on either DNR or other public lands will not be counted as in-kind match.

Documented volunteer hours may be counted as in-kind match. Forms are provided for this purpose and are available on the [Grantee Information](#) webpage. Grantees may use their own forms as long as the same information is provided.

### **2. Contractors**

Contractors are individuals, groups or companies paid by a grantee to perform all or portions of the work as outlined in the grant. Contractors are subject to the same restrictions and responsibilities as the grantee. It is strongly recommended that all contractors meet the same insurance requirements as the grantee. An organization's conflict of Interest policy must be followed when selecting subgrantees, contractors, or vendors.

Contractors will be required to certify that they have not been debarred or suspended from participation in federal assistance awards in accordance with 40 CFR Part 32. Suspended or debarred vendors may not be used for a CPL project, regardless if grant or match funds are being used to pay for contracted services. See the State of MN's [Suspended/Debarred Vendor Report](#) to check for potential conflicts before hiring contractors.

### **3. Selecting Contractors**

Contractors must be selected as described below, except for professional acquisition services provided by the DNR's Lands and Minerals Division for lands to be transferred to DNR.

- a. If the value of the services is anticipated to be less than \$5,000 a competitive process is not required.
- b. If the value is anticipated to be between \$5,000 and \$50,000, an informal competitive process must be used unless the grantee prefers to use a more formal process.
  - i. The bid solicitation process must be open and available to all interested parties.
  - ii. The advertisement for bid must allow for fair competition among potentially qualified bidders.
- c. If the anticipated value is greater than \$50,000, a formal RFP and rating process must be used.
- d. In all cases, records of the process must be retained in the grantee's file.
- e. Contracts funded with CPL funds must incorporate all CPL and OHF requirements.

### **4. Prevailing Wages**

It is the responsibility of the grant recipient or contractor to pay prevailing wages on construction projects to which state prevailing wage laws apply ([MN Statutes 177.42-177.44](#)). All laborers and mechanics employed by grant recipients and subcontractors

funded in whole or in part with state funds included in this RFP shall be paid at least the prevailing wage rate as projects of a similar character in the locality. Examples of applicable projects include construction or maintenance of roads, buildings, bridges, dams, and utilities.

Additional information on prevailing wage requirements is available on the Department of Labor and Industry (DOLI) website at <http://www.dli.mn.gov/LS/PrevWage.asp>. Questions about the application of prevailing wage rates should be directed to DOLI at 651-284-5091. The Grant recipient is solely responsible for payment of all required prevailing wage rates.

## **H. Grantee Responsibilities**

### **1. Project Manager**

- a. There can only be one Project (Grant) Manager at a time for each grant.
- b. The Project Manager cannot be the Land Manager.
- c. The Project Manager receives all correspondence from CPL staff
- d. The Project Manager must be actively involved and available to provide information during the grant application review period and through the life of the grant.
- e. The Project Manager must be affiliated with the grant recipient's organization and must be knowledgeable about biological, partnership, and administrative aspects of the proposal.
- f. The Project Manager is responsible for ensuring that all work is done according to grant and program requirements.
- g. The Project Manager coordinates work with the Land Manager, and is responsible for ordering and purchasing supplies, writing and administering contracts, organizing and documenting volunteers, meeting permit requirements, etc. Some of these duties may be shared with the fiscal contact.

### **2. Fiscal Contact Responsibilities**

- a. There can only be one Fiscal Contact for each grant at a time. This may be the same person as the Project Manager.
- b. The Fiscal Contact works cooperatively with the Project Manager, but focuses on the fiscal side of the grant. Specific duties are determined by the grantee's organization, but generally include grant and match fund management, bill paying, submitting payment requests, etc.
- c. The Fiscal Contact will frequently be included on emails and other communications between CPL Staff and grantees.

## **I. Project Reports, Grant Monitoring, and Financial Audits**

### **1. Accomplishment Reports**

An [Accomplishment Report](#) is required from grantees to document project accomplishments and actual costs annually. Accomplishment Reports are due by September 1st of each year the grant is active until the [Final Accomplishment Report](#) is submitted. These annual reports will summarize the work completed in each state fiscal year, running from July 1- June 30. The Final Accomplishment Report captures all costs and work completed during the grant period.

Payments requested by grantees with outstanding reports will not be processed. It is expected that grantees will meet or exceed the planned accomplishments as outlined in their Work

Plan. The [Accomplishment Report](#) form is available on the [Grantee Information](#) page on the CPL website. [State Grant Policy 08-09, Grant Progress Reports](#), is available for more information.

## **2. Grant Monitoring**

[State Grant Policy 08-10, Grant Monitoring](#), requires state agencies to conduct at least one monitoring visit and financial reconciliation per grant period on all state grants over \$50,000 and to conduct at least annual monitoring visits on grants over \$250,000. Monitoring may be done in person or by telephone, at the discretion of CPL staff.

Field reviews are intended to ensure that work was performed as described in the grant contract. Financial audits ensure grant funds and match funds are properly spent and accounted for. Grants under \$50,000 are occasionally subject to monitoring, based upon grantee performance, history of grants management, and the activity that was funded.

## **3. Additional Audits**

The DNR and/or Legislative Auditors may also conduct financial reconciliation audits. As per [M.S. 97A.056, Subd. 10](#), a technical evaluation panel will be created to evaluate restoration projects funded by the Outdoor Heritage Fund. Restoration projects funded through CPL may be subject to an additional review by the Habitat Restoration Evaluation Program. If selected for this evaluation, the grantee will be notified of any needed information and the process for this evaluation.

## **J. Payment Information**

### **1. Method of Payment**

Grantees will be paid on a reimbursement basis unless a services rendered basis is specified and approved in a grantee's application and grant agreement.

- a. Services rendered basis: proof of work, service, or purchase of goods must be submitted to CPL Staff as an invoice along with a request for payment. Staff will pay the grantee based on the approved invoices. Proof that the vendor has been paid (receipt from vendor, cancelled check, etc.) is required before any additional payments will be made to the grantee.
- b. Reimbursement basis: the same as above, except that proof of payment to vendors is included with the payment request. There is no outstanding documentation with this method of payment.
- c. [State Grant Policy 08-08, Grant Payments](#) has more information on grant payment methods and schedules, and other payment information.

### **2. Requesting Grant Payments**

All payment requests must be on the [Payment Request Form](#) provided on the [Current Grantee Information](#) webpage of the CPL website. The Payment Request Form includes match expenditure as well. All documentation must be included, and any other requirements met (such as submission of restoration plans or annual reports) and approved before payment will be made. The [Payment Manual](#) provides more detailed information.

### **3. Match Documentation**

All match must be spent and documented before the final grant payment will be made. Each payment request that claims match has been spent must include documentation of the match.

Volunteer reporting forms and material use forms are available on the [Grantee Information](#) webpage to document this work.

The minimum required amount of match must be spent and documented before the final grant payment will be made. If the minimum required match is not met or cannot be accounted for by the end of the grant period, the amount of grant funds paid will be reduced. The amount eligible for reimbursement will be pro-rated, using the total documented match amount as a basis for the reduction.

#### **4. Payment Requests**

The [Current Grantee Information](#) page of the CPL website lists payment information and forms. [Payment request checklists](#) are available to aid grantees in submitting complete requests. All payment requests must be received by 3:00 pm CST, July 31, 2018. The Final [Accomplishment Report](#) and all supporting documentation must also be submitted with the final payment request.

#### **5. Acquisition Payments**

Acquisition payments may be requested in advance of scheduled closing dates. The Grantee should check with CPL staff to ensure that all acquisition requirements have been fulfilled prior to scheduling the closing. At a minimum, an administrative review of the appraisal is required before payment will be authorized.

Grantees must submit requests for payment 30 days prior to closing if payment is needed before the closing. The closing date must be noted on the request. Advances must be specified in the grant agreement. The 5 percent holdback applies to acquisition projects as well; budget accordingly for payments.

#### **6. Payment Timeline**

If all required documentation is submitted with the payment request, CPL Grant Staff can generally review and approve requests for payment within a week of receiving the request. If questions arise or documents are missing, payment approval may take longer. [Checklists](#) that can be used as cover sheets to help grantees submit the correct documents can be found on the CPL website. Once payments are approved, they are sent to the DNR's business office for payment. The payment process will take up to 30 days from receipt of complete payment request.

#### **7. EFT Payments**

The fastest way to receive payment is by signing up for Electronic Funds Transfers (EFT) from Minnesota Management and Budget. This can be done online; vendor ID numbers are considered the log-in name. Passwords can be created or reset if forgotten. Instructions can be found at the [eSupplier portal](#). Grantees can also review payment information online. Funds are deposited directly into the grantee's account, typically within 72 hours of payment processing.

#### **8. Holdback of Final Payment**

Under [ML2014, Ch. 256, Art. 1, Sec. 2, Subd. 5\(m\) and 5\(n\)](#), no less than 5 percent of the total grant amount must be held back from final reimbursement until the grant recipient has completed a [Final Accomplishment Report](#). All other required documentation must be submitted and accepted by this time.

While acquisitions are paid differently than enhancement and restoration work, the 5 percent holdback still applies. The 5 percent will be paid in full to the grantee when all reporting and documentation requirements have been fulfilled for the acquisition. If an acquisition also has enhancement or restoration funds associated with it, the 5 percent will be applied to the final payment for all work, as described above.

## **9. Grantee Information Webpage**

The [Payment Manual](#), document checklists, in-kind reporting forms, [Accomplishment Reports](#), and more can be found on the [Grantee Information](#) page of the CPL website. This page contains all information, forms, etc. that will be required once a project is funded.

## **Project Information**

### **I. General Information**

#### **A. Permitting and Environmental Compliance Requirements**

Because the CPL program is funded with state dollars, and work frequently occurs on public lands, the DNR, grantee, and any contractor must comply with various permitting requirements and environmental laws. Such compliance requires the participation and cooperation of the DNR, CPL grant applicant, appropriate public Land Manager, and/or private landowner and conservation Easement Holder. The grantee is responsible for understanding and following all these requirements. These requirements apply to all projects.

Each type of land has different legal, agency, and other requirements that must be met based on the ownership or designations. Specific administrative and environmental requirements can be found on the [Working on Public Lands](#) and [Working on Private Lands](#) documents on the CPL website.

#### **B. Requirements for Work on Eligible Lands**

##### **1. Public Lands**

As part of the application approval process for work on public lands, the grant applicant and appropriate public Land Manager will:

- a. Evaluate the proposed project to confirm that it meets guidelines for the public land management unit where the work will be done;
- b. Complete or request a Natural Heritage Database Review to check for any federal or state listed threatened or endangered species, or critical habitats;
- c. Plan work to mitigate the introduction or spread of invasive species;
- d. Discuss other applicable legal requirements, permits or environmental compliance needed; and
- e. Discuss the cost and timelines to complete this work.

##### **2. Private Lands**

As part of the application approval process for work on private lands, the grant applicant must work with the Easement Holder to:

- a. Evaluate the proposed project to confirm that it is allowed under the terms of the easement;
- b. Determine if the landowner is responsible for completing the proposed work under the terms of the easement;

- c. Complete or request a Natural Heritage Database Review to check for any federally or state listed threatened or endangered species, or critical habitats;
- d. Plan work to mitigate the introduction or spread of invasive species;
- e. Discuss other applicable legal requirements, permits or environmental compliance needed; and
- f. Discuss the cost and timelines to complete this work.

### **3. Working in Public Waters**

As provided in [ML2014, Ch. 256, Art. 1, Sec. 2, Subd. 5\(m\) and 5\(n\)](#) public waters are eligible for restoration and enhancement work. In order to complete projects within public waters, there must be a [Public Waters Project Form](#) and at least one [Land Manager Review and Approval Form](#) completed per public water project site.

- a. [DNR Area Hydrologist](#) must complete the Public Waters Project Form.
- b. DNR Area Fisheries Supervisor or Area Wildlife Manager must complete the Land Manager Review and Approval Form.
  - i. This depends on who is managing or has interest in the public water body;
  - ii. Both Fisheries and Wildlife may choose to provide input – applicants must contact both.
- c. Appropriate grantee organizational approval (county approval if the applicant is a county, etc.), when necessary.
  - i. Required to ensure funding is desired and application is approved by organization.
  - ii. Required when organizations are applying for funding to complete work within their own land (same requirement for non-public waters work).

Call [CPL Grant Staff](#) with any questions and for any clarifications. Applicants planning to work in public waters should review [Requirements for Projects Involving Public Waters Work Permits](#) and [Do I need a Permit?](#) prior to applying for funding.

### **C. Budgeting for Permitting and Environmental Compliance**

Applicants may include the cost of permits and environmental compliance in their request for grant funding. These are considered project costs and may be paid with either grant or match funds. The amount should be based on the actual expected permitting and/or environmental compliance cost, and a detailed description should be included. Any costs that exceed the amount budgeted are the responsibility of the grantee and may be used for match if approved by CPL Grant Staff. Any costs that come in under budget may be used for other work within the approved project.

During the application review and evaluation process, the application will be examined to determine whether any significant permitting and/or environmental issues are involved in the project, and if the applicant has budgeted appropriately for compliance costs. Applications will be scored on whether the amount budgeted appears reasonable.

### **D. Invasive Species Requirements**

The DNR requires active steps to prevent or limit the introduction, establishment, and spread of invasive species during all activities performed on all lands through the CPL grant program. The grantee and/or hired contractor shall prevent invasive species from entering into or spreading within a project site by cleaning equipment prior to arriving at the project site.

If the equipment, vehicles, gear, or clothing arrives at the project site with soil, aggregate material, mulch, vegetation (including seeds) or animals, it shall be cleaned by grantee/contractor furnished tool or equipment (brush/broom, compressed air or pressure washer) at the staging area. The grantee/contractor shall dispose of material cleaned from equipment and clothing at a location determined by the land manager. If the material cannot be disposed of onsite, secure material prior to transport (sealed container, covered truck, or wrap with tarp) and legally dispose of offsite.

The grantee/contractor shall ensure that all equipment and clothing used for work in infested waters has been adequately decontaminated for invasive species (ex. zebra mussels) prior to being used in non-infested waters. All equipment and clothing including but not limited to waders, tracked vehicles, barges, boats, turbidity curtain, sheet pile, and pumps that comes in contact with any infested waters must be thoroughly decontaminated.

## **II. Restoration and Enhancement Projects**

These projects must restore or enhance habitat for fish, game, or wildlife on lands permanently protected by conservation easement as defined in [MN Statutes 84C.01](#), on lands protected by public ownership, or in waters designated as public waters as defined in [MN Statutes 103G.005, subdivision 15](#).

### **A. General Requirements**

1. Recipients of CPL grant funds must give consideration to and timely written contact to [CCM](#) for consideration of use of their services for restoration and enhancement work. A copy of this written contact must be submitted to CPL Grant staff before the grant agreement is executed. CPL staff will provide information on fulfilling this requirement after awards are announced.
2. All restorations must use current conservation science to achieve the best restoration results possible.
3. An [Ecological Restoration and Management Plan](#) must be prepared for all restorations that to the degree practicable, is consistent with the current conservation science and ecological goals for the restoration site. This plan must be completed on the forms provided on the [Current Grantee Information](#) and will be due with the first payment request.
4. Maintenance work necessary to ensure the project is successful (such as spraying, mowing, etc.), is required for the length of the grant period, and must be included in the application. This work may be paid for with either grant or match funds.

### **B. Use of Pesticides**

DNR [Operational Order 59](#) (Pesticides and Pest Control) and appropriate discipline guidelines must be followed when working on all lands and waters, regardless of ownership.

For pesticide use on all CPL projects:

1. Anyone applying pesticides must have a current MN commercial Applicator's License issued by the MN Department of Agriculture (MDA).
2. All applications of pesticides must be made in compliance with the pesticide label and labeling.
3. Records of pesticide use on all lands must be maintained according to MDA or DNR division guidelines. The Land Manager must be provided a copy of the records within 30 days of the final annual application or before the expiration of the grant agreement, whichever comes first.

4. Pesticide use may require the grantee and any contractors to carry additional Pollution Liability insurance.

**C. Vegetation and Seed Requirements**

1. All vegetation and seed mixes must be approved by the appropriate Land Manager in writing. Any changes must also be approved by the appropriate Land Manager in writing. Substitutions of individual species are acceptable if they meet the intended goals of a project/program and are approved by the public Land Manager or Easement Holder.
2. Seed mixes should be an appropriate match for the specific site conditions.
3. Use seed sources within, or adjacent to, the same ecoregion, to the extent possible. The Minnesota Ecological Sections and Subsections map located at [BWSR - Native Vegetation / Seed Mixes](#) shows areas of the state with ecological similarities and can be used as a guide for selecting seed.
4. All seed shall be supplied as Pure Live Seed.
5. Provide “yellow tags” to the public Land Manager or Easement Holder. If yellow tags are not available, provide written documentation describing where the seed originated from.

**D. Facility Development**

Facility development or improvement projects such as parking lots, roads, and hunter blinds are not considered habitat projects. For CPL, limited approval of development will be permitted only as part of the initial development of newly acquired lands with these grant funds. Public use facilities must have a minimal impact on habitat on acquired lands.

**E. Construction Projects**

Any projects requesting money for construction activities (water control structures, etc.) must have final engineering design and plans completed for the project prior to application submission. These plans are necessary to develop the best methods and cost estimate for completing the project prior to requesting grant funds. All plans must be submitted with the application.

All design, engineering, survey costs, etc. may be used as match if completed within 18 months of application deadline. For more information, see “Pre-Award Costs.”

CPL Grant Staff may request additional information from the applicant during the review process to verify project and cost information. All plans must include safety features that meet OSHA standards.

**F. Pollinator Habitat Enhancement**

DNR practices and guidelines for pollinator habitat enhancement must be used for all habitat enhancement or restoration of lands under the commissioner's control as soon as they become available. Prairie restorations conducted on state lands or with state funds must include an appropriate diversity of native species selected to provide habitat for pollinators throughout the growing season. Recommendations for appropriate species must be incorporated into projects as soon as they become available.

**III. Acquisition Projects**

Applicants applying for either fee title or permanent conservation easement acquisitions should review the requirements and information found on the [Land Acquisition](#) page of the CPL website

prior to applying for funding. You must also work closely with the Land Manager and DNR Lands and Minerals staff throughout the project.

#### **A. General Acquisition Requirements**

1. All acquisitions must be from willing sellers.
2. Each potential tract must be identified in the application. The applicant's priority for acquiring the tracts must be given.
3. Acquisitions must be completed by the end of the grant period.
4. The minimum standard for all appraisals is the Uniform Standards of Professional Appraisal Practice (USPAP) standards.
5. All appraisals are subject to review by DNR staff.
6. The portion of the purchase price paid with CPL or other state funds may not exceed 110 percent of the appraised value.
7. Acquisitions paid for with CPL funding may not impede snowmobile trails. All parcels acquired with an existing snowmobile trail in place must allow trails to remain during the snowmobile season.
8. A [restoration and management plan](#) must be prepared for all newly acquired lands. This plan must be completed on the forms provided on the [CPL website](#) and will be due with the first payment request. Sufficient funding for implementation of the plan must be identified.

#### **B. Fee Title Acquisitions**

Lands acquired in fee title must be open to the public for hunting and fishing during all open seasons unless otherwise provided by state law. Lands acquired and transferred to the USFWS must be open to the taking of fish and game as according the National Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act, U.S. Code Title.

For fee title acquisitions, the final title holder and land manager must be specified in the application. Lands that will be conveyed to a public agency must be donated to that agency.

##### **1. Land acquisition restrictions**

###### [MS 97A.056](#)

- a. An interest in real property, including but not limited to an easement or fee title, that is acquired with money appropriated under this section must be used in perpetuity or for the specific term of an easement interest for the purpose for which the appropriation was made.
- b. A recipient of funding who acquires an interest in real property subject to this subdivision may not alter the intended use of the interest in real property or convey any interest in the real property acquired with the appropriation without the prior review and approval of the Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council or its successor. The council shall notify the chairs and ranking minority members of the legislative committees and divisions with jurisdiction over the outdoor heritage fund at least 15 business days before approval under this paragraph.
- c. The Council shall establish procedures to review requests from recipients to alter the use of or convey an interest in real property. These procedures shall allow for the replacement of the interest in real property with another interest in real property meeting the following criteria:
  - i. The interest is at least equal in fair market value, as certified by the commissioner of natural resources, to the interest being replaced; and

- ii. The interest is in a reasonably equivalent location and has a reasonably equivalent useful conservation purpose compared to the interest being replaced, taking into consideration all effects from fragmentation of the whole habitat.
- d. A recipient of funding who acquires an interest in real property under paragraph (a) must separately record a notice of funding restrictions in the appropriate local government office where the conveyance of the interest in real property is filed. The notice of funding agreement must contain:
  - i. a legal description of the interest in real property covered by the funding agreement;
  - ii. a reference to the underlying funding agreement;
  - iii. a reference to this section; and
  - iv. the following statement: "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 precludes its use for the intended purpose as specified in the appropriation."

## **2. Lands in Public Domain**

### [MS 97A.056](#)

Money appropriated from the OHF shall not be used to purchase any land in fee title or a permanent conservation easement if the land in question is fully or partially owned by the State of MN or a political subdivision of the state, unless:

- a. The purchase creates additional direct benefit to protect, restore, or enhance the state's wetlands, prairies, forests, or habitat for fish, game, and wildlife; and
- b. The purchase is approved by an affirmative vote of at least nine members of the council.

## **3. Acquisition Documentation Requirements**

### [ML2014, Ch. 256, Art. 1, Sec. 2, Subd. 5\(m\) and 5\(n\), MS 97A.056](#)

For all acquisition projects, grantees must submit an acquisition packet within 60 days of the property closing. This packet must contain:

- a. Documentation of the selection process used to identify the parcels acquired;
- b. Documentation of all related transaction costs for all parties involved in the transaction, including but not limited to:
  - i. appraisals
  - ii. legal fees
  - iii. recording fees
  - iv. commissions
  - v. other similar costs, and
  - vi. donations
- c. Documentation of any difference between the acquisition amount paid to the seller and the state-certified or state-reviewed appraisal; and
- d. An analysis describing the increased operations and management costs likely to be incurred by public entities as a result of the acquisition, and how these costs are to be paid.

- e. Upon receiving and approving the packet, CPL staff will forward appropriate documents to the L-SOHC and other entities, as required.

#### **4. Real Property Interest Report**

[ML2014, Ch. 256, Art. 1, Sec. 2, Subd. 5\(m\) and 5\(n\), MS 97A.056](#)

For all lands that are acquired under this program, the grantee must make the following report:

By January 1 each year, a recipient of money appropriated under this section that is used for the acquisition of an interest in real property, including but not limited to an easement or fee title, must submit annual reports on the status of the real property to the Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council or its successor in a form determined by the Council. The responsibility for reporting under this section may be transferred by the recipient of the appropriation to another person or entity that holds the interest in the real property. To complete the transfer of reporting responsibility, the recipient of the appropriation must:

- a. inform the person to whom the responsibility is transferred of that person's reporting responsibility;
- b. inform the person to whom the responsibility is transferred of the property restrictions under subdivision 13;
- c. provide written notice to the council of the transfer of reporting responsibility, including contact information for the person to whom the responsibility is transferred; and
- d. provide the Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council or its successor written documentation from the person or entity holding the interest in real property certifying its acceptance of all reporting obligations and responsibilities previously held by the recipient of the appropriation.

After the transfer, the person or entity that holds the interest in the real property is responsible for reporting requirements under this section.

#### **C. Acquisitions that will be Conveyed to the DNR**

Applicants intending to acquire land that will be conveyed to DNR must follow [Land Acquisition Procedures for Land to Be Conveyed to DNR](#). All proposed tracts must be on the DNR's approved acquisition priority list prior to the application deadline. Applicants should work with the DNR manager who will manage the land to make sure all parcels have the prior approval needed.

##### **1. Land acquisition costs**

The DNR incurs costs when accepting gifts of land. To help cover these costs and prevent supplanting of other funds, Land Acquisition Fees must be included in the CPL grant budget. These fees are only payable with grant funds. Costs incurred include DNR realty staff time to manage and monitor acquisition projects, review appraisals, ensure proper procedures are followed, and that all DNR and OHF requirements are met.

Currently DNR's cost is estimated at an average of \$4,000 per acquisition. This amount must be budgeted in the application. If the acquisition is complex (multiple parcels, multiple landowners, unclear titles, etc.), acquisition costs may be higher and additional funds may be awarded to cover these costs. Any funds remaining after DNR costs are paid may be returned to the grantee's budget for use as part of the approved Work Plan.

## 2. County Board Approval Requirements

DNR [Operational Order 6, Land Acquisition Procedures](#), provides for county notification as follows:

- a. The DNR will contact the appropriate county official on all proposed land acquisitions and easements to gain county board approval, including donations that will be transferred to the DNR. The DNR discipline initiating the transaction is responsible for gaining county board approval.
- b. County board approval is required for the purchase or lease of wildlife management area lands, wildlife management area easements and scientific and natural areas, and lands purchased with Reinvest in Minnesota (RIM) match funds (Minnesota Statutes, Secs. [84.033](#), subd. 3, [84.944](#), subd. 3, and [97A.145](#), subd. 2).

## 3. Initial Development Plans

Initial Development Plans (IDPs) are required on all fee-title acquisitions that will be transferred to the DNR, and may be required by other entities that will own or manage lands acquired with CPL funds. These plans lay out the specific work necessary to bring a parcel up to minimum standards for public use, including boundary posting, signs, parking lots, habitat development and site clean-up. The IDP may be paid for with either grant or match funds, and those plans are incorporated into the Land Manager Review and Approval form. The application's budget page must reflect the information contained on that IDP form if grant or match funds are to be used.

See [DNR Development Standards for WMA/AMAs](#) for more information for lands that will be conveyed to DNR as Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs) or Aquatic Management Areas (AMAs). Contact the appropriate Land Manager for information on other lands.

## 4. Transferring Lands to the State

[MS 97A.056](#) states that when a parcel of land that was previously purchased with Outdoor Heritage Funds is transferred to the state, the owner of the land shall disclose to CPL staff:

- a. All revenues generated from activities on the land from the time the land was purchased with Outdoor Heritage Funds until the land was transferred to the state;
- b. All holding costs associated with managing the land between the time of purchase with outdoor heritage funds and the time the land was transferred to the state; and
- c. The total net revenues as determined by subtracting the costs described in clause (2) from the revenues described in clause (1).

### D. Acquisitions that will NOT be Conveyed to the DNR

Applicants intending to acquire land that will be not conveyed to DNR must follow [Land Acquisition Procedures for Land NOT Conveyed to DNR](#). For lands to be conveyed to a governmental agency, a copy of the appraisal and appraisal review must be submitted to CPL staff. For lands to be conveyed to a non-governmental entity, the appraisal must be reviewed by CPL staff. This review is administrative only and is not a full technical review.

Other requirements such as county board approvals, and initial development work should be discussed with the entity that will receive the land. Properties to be conveyed to a federal agency or other public agency must have the proper approvals from that agency prior to application. Applicants must meet the requirements of the receiving entity.

## **E. Easement Requirements**

1. Appraisals for conservation easements must be done by a person trained and experienced in doing conservation easements.
2. Some State programs have specific statutory guidelines for determining the value of easements acquired under that program. If that State program will be the final Easement Holder, any entity acquiring the easement may use that program's statutory method for the easement valuation. The easement must be gifted to the State program. For more information, see DNR's [Supplemental Appraisal and Appraisal Review Guidelines](#), Section 11 (O) (page 28).
3. A copy of the proposed easement and stewardship plan must be sent to DNR for review prior to closing. If DNR will be a party to the easement, appropriate DNR staff must be involved in easement discussions and stewardship plan writing.
4. Applicants intending to acquire permanent conservation easements are encouraged to adopt and implement the practices and procedures described in the Land Trust Alliance's [Trust Standards and Practices](#). Applicants must explain their standards and practices for easement stewardship on lands protected with OHF funds.
5. As described in [ML2014, Ch. 256, Art. 1, Sec. 2, Subd. 5\(m\) and 5\(n\)](#) and [MS 97A.056](#), all easements must:
  - a. meet [MN Statutes 84C](#)
  - b. be permanent
  - c. specify the parties to an easement in the easement
  - d. specify all of the provisions of an agreement that are permanent
  - e. specify the habitat types and location being protected
  - f. when appropriate for conservation or water protection outcomes, require the grantor to employ practices retaining water on the eased land as long as practicable
  - g. specify the responsibilities of the parties for habitat enhancement and restoration and the associated costs of these activities
  - h. include a long-term stewardship plan and funding for monitoring and enforcing the agreement, and
  - i. identify the parties responsible for monitoring and enforcing the easement agreement

## **IV. Other Requirements and Information**

### **A. Insurance**

Grantees are required to carry insurance that meets or exceeds the requirements of the landowner whose land they will be working on. Insurance requirements for working on State lands are listed below. For all other lands, grantees should discuss insurance with the landowner/ land manager during their project meeting and follow their requirements. Proof of insurance will be required prior to a grant being executed. Applicants should investigate the cost of insurance before submitting an application.

The grantee shall maintain insurance to cover claims which may arise from operations under this contract, whether such operations are by grantee or contractor or by anyone directly or indirectly employed under this grant.

Any Umbrella or Excess Liability insurance policy may be used to supplement the grantee's policy limit to satisfy the full policy limits required by the contract.

## 1. General Insurance Requirements

- a. The grantee must submit a copy of the Certificate of Insurance to the Grant Program Staff before the grant agreement is executed. The industry standard *Accord* form is the typical Certificate of Insurance provided.
- b. All policies and certificates shall provide that the policies shall remain in force and effect throughout the term of the service being provided.
- c. Policy shall provide the state of Minnesota with thirty (30) days advance written notice of cancellation.
- d. The policy(ies) shall be primary insurance available to the state of Minnesota with respect to any claim arising out of providing service to the State.
- e. The state of Minnesota must be endorsed as an additional insured on the general liability coverage.
- f. It is strongly recommended that all contractors meet the same insurance requirements as the grantee. Contractors must file evidence of insurance with the grantee.
- g. If Grantee is self-insured, a Certificate of Self-Insurance must be attached.
- h. The Insurance Companies must have an “AM Best” rating of A- (minus), Financial Size Category (FSC) VII or better, and be authorized to do business in the state of Minnesota.
- i. The Grantee’s insurance company waives its right to assert the immunity of the State as a defense to any claims made under said insurance.

## 2. Workers’ Compensation Insurance

The grantee and subcontractors, if any, must provide Workers’ Compensation insurance for all employees, in accordance with the statutory requirements of the state of Minnesota, including Coverage B, Employer’s Liability.

- a. Statutory Compensation Coverage
- b. Coverage B- Employer’s Liability with limits of not less than:
  - i. \$100,000 Bodily Injury by Disease per Employee
  - ii. \$500,000 Bodily Injury by Disease Aggregate
  - iii. \$100 Bodily Injury by Accident

If [MN Statutes 176.041](#) exempts Grantee from Workers’ Compensation insurance or if the Grantee has no employees in the State of Minnesota, Grantee must provide a written statement, signed by the authorized signer of the contract, stating the qualifying exemption that excludes Grantee from MN Workers’ Compensation requirements. The statement must also include “if during the course of the contract the Grantee becomes eligible for Workers’ Compensation, the Grantee will comply with the Workers’ Compensation Insurance requirements and provide the State of Minnesota with a certificate of insurance.”

## 3. Automobile Liability Insurance

- a. Minimum Limits of Liability:
  - i. Minnesota State No-Fault: passenger vehicle such as car, van, pickup
  - ii. If towing or using a commercial vehicle, the combined single limit shall be the same as required under the General Liability Insurance, below:
    1. Any Auto
    2. All Owned Auto
    3. Scheduled Auto
    4. Hired Auto
    5. Non-owned Auto

- iii. The grantee and any contractors shall maintain insurance to cover liability arising out of the operations, use or maintenance of all owned, non-owned and hired automobiles. Evidence of contractor insurance shall be filed with the grantee.

#### 4. Pollution Insurance

- a. Required Automobile Insurance when hauling hazardous substances, materials or pollutants:

- i. The following endorsement to the Vendor's/Contractor's Auto policy is required to cover liabilities, i.e., clean up monitoring, testing, stemming from pollutant discharge, release, spills, while being transported if an accident occurs:

- CA 9948 – Pollution Liability – Broadened Coverage Endorsement (or equivalent), and
- MCS 90 Endorsement (based on commodity transported and the type of vehicle transporting it):
- For-hire (in Interstate or foreign commerce) with a gross vehicle weight rating of 10,000 or more pounds – Commodity Transported – Property (nonhazardous)
- For-hire and private (in Interstate, foreign, or intrastate commerce) with a gross vehicle weight rating of 10,000 or more pounds – Commodity Transported – Hazardous substances, as defined in 49 CFR 171.8, transported in cargo tanks, portable tanks or hopper-type vehicles with capacities in excess of 3,500 water gallons or in bulk.
- For-hire and private (in Interstate or foreign commerce, in any quantity; or in Intrastate commerce) with a gross vehicle weight rating of 10,000 or more pounds – Commodity Transported – Oil listed in 49 CFR 172.101; hazardous waste, hazardous materials and substances defined in 49 CFR 171.8 and listed in 49 CFR 172.101.
- For-hire and private (in Interstate or foreign commerce, in any quantity) with a gross vehicle weight rating of less than 10,000 pounds – Commodity Transported – Any quantity of Division 1.1, 1.2, or 1.3 material, any quantity of a Division 2.3, Hazard A, or Division 6.1, Packing Group 1, Hazard A material; or highway route controlled quantities of a Class 7 material as defined in 49 CFR 173.403.

- b. Full Pollution Insurance required for the following:

- i. Aerial application of pesticides - if a vehicle is required to carry pesticides to the airplane, they will need additional automobile endorsement: CA 9948 Endorsement – Pollution Liability – Broadened coverage
- ii. Old Riverboat at Itasca due to potential risk if vessel were to sink.
- iii. All activities listed below under sections c and d if not approved for reduced coverage.

- c. Upon approval from CPL grant staff, \$500,000 Pollution Insurance may be acceptable for the following:

- i. broadcast ground spraying of pesticides with the use of
- ii. skidder
- iii. tractor
- iv. dozer
- v. ATV

- d. Upon approval from CPL staff, Pollution Insurance may be waived for the following:

- i. pesticide cut-stump applications
- ii. ground spot spraying
- iii. spraying individual plants
- iv. backpack spraying
- v. spraying of animal browse repellents

## 5. General Liability Insurance

Minimum Limits of Liability:

- a. \$1,500,000 - Per Occurrence
- b. \$1,500,000 - Annual Aggregate
- c. Coverage required:
  - i. Premises and Operations Bodily Injury and Property Damage
  - ii. Personal & Advertising Injury
  - iii. Blanket Contractual
  - iv. Products and Completed Operations
  - v. State of Minnesota and its agencies, officers, and employees (State) endorsed as an Additional Insured
  - vi. Other (Note: please list, i.e., pollution liability, water or aircraft, chemical liability)
  - vii. Aircraft liability limits - \$1,500,000 single limit for each occurrence for bodily injury and property damage combined and \$100,000 single limit for each occurrence for aircraft passenger liability.
- d. Contractor's Pollution Liability (or equivalent) Pollution Liability coverage endorsed on another form of liability coverage, such as general liability or professional errors and omissions policy. Required for any project with herbicide application/chemical treatment.

Pollution Insurance **minimum** amounts are as follows:

- \$2,000,000 per Claim
- \$2,000,000 Annual Aggregate

The following coverage shall be included:

- Policy will include non-owned disposal site Pollution Liability.
- Policy will not include a lead exclusion.

It is a requirement of the State that coverage for the period of the Contract will be maintained for a period of no less than three (3) years for claims-made coverage or (1) year for occurrence coverage, after the expiration of the Contract.

Name the State, its officers and employees, and CPV members, their officers and employees, as an additional insured with respect to services provided, except with respect to an equivalent (to Contractor's pollution) pollution liability coverage **endorsed on a professional errors and omissions policy** as approved by the State.

## 6. Insurance May Be Modified Under the Following Conditions

- a. Government Agencies and Utility Companies
 

Insurance may be waived on all contractual services performed by government agencies and utility companies provided the following clause is included on all contracts over \$500. "Each party agrees that it will be responsible for its own acts and omissions and the results thereof to the extent authorized by law and will not be responsible for the acts of the other party and results thereof. The State's liability will be governed by the

provisions of the Minnesota Tort Claims Act, Minnesota Statutes, Section 3.736, and other applicable law.”

b. Other Modifications

i. Work involving only hand or small power equipment:

- Insurance Required: Workers’ compensation and minimum state no-fault auto insurance.
- This includes projects that are labor intensive with no equipment involved except transportation of crews or hand equipment.
- Possible activities: Site cleanup, seed harvest, hand planting of trees, shrubs or other plants, hand timber stand work, bud capping, hand herbicide application.
- Beaver trapping

ii. Remote area work:

- Remote area defined: Areas where public contact is unlikely, no generally traveled public roads are adjacent to the area, and no recreation area or area where members of the public would be is adjacent to the area. The State Land Manager must confirm that the project site and/or timing of the work qualify it as a remote area.
- Insurance Required: Workers’ compensation and minimum state no-fault auto insurance
- Possible activities: Farming operation work such as mowing, plowing, shearing, disking, and mechanical tree planting.

**B. Tax Identification Number**

Upon notification of receiving a grant, all grantees must register or verify correct information for their vendor status with the State. A federal tax identification number is required to do business with the State of Minnesota and grantees must be registered within the state vendor system. Grantees will be required to submit their state Vendor ID# before the grant agreement can be developed. See the [Vendor Information page](#) to register or update information. The vendor address on file with the state must match either the project manager or fiscal contact mailing address within the application/Work Plan.

**C. Purchase of Recycled and Recyclable Materials**

Grantees and any subgrantees must use grant funds in compliance with Minnesota Statutes, sections [16B.121](#), regarding purchase of recycled, repairable, and durable materials, and [16B.122](#), regarding purchase and use of paper stock and printing.

**D. Accessibility**

Structural and nonstructural facilities and programs must meet all state and federal accessibility laws, regulations, and guidelines, including the American with Disabilities Act (ADA). Accessibility guidelines and standards can be found at <http://www.access-board.gov>.

**E. Logo and Signage**

Recipients must display a sign with the Legacy logo at all project sites near an access or entrance point. Signs are provided for by the CPL program, and will be delivered to the grant recipient or land manager for installation. The logo shall be incorporated, where practical, into printed and other materials funded with CPL funds. The Legacy logo may be downloaded from the

Minnesota Legacy website's [Legacy Logo](#) page for publications, press releases or other printed documents. Only these approved logos and signs may be used.

## V. General Definitions

**Applicant:** An eligible organization or government entity that is applying for grant funds under the CPL program.

**Conflict of Interest (COI):** May be actual or perceived. COI occurs when a person has actual or apparent duty or loyalty to more than one organization and the competing duties or loyalties may result in actions which are adverse or favorable to one or both parties. A conflict of interest exists even if no unethical, improper or illegal act results from it.

**Encumber:** The process in which DNR accounting staff tie up funds in the state accounting system. This happens after the grant has been awarded and the grant agreement has been prepared, but before it is routed for execution.

**Execute:** A grant agreement is considered "executed" once the last signature has been obtained. The steps to fully execute a grant are as follows: 1. encumber funds, 2. obtain authorized grantee's signature, and 3. obtain FAW Division Director's signature. Work may not begin until all signatures have been obtained.

**Fiscal Contact:** Person responsible for managing and tracking all grant and match expenses, maintaining files to meet generally accepted accounting standards, submitting requests for payment, paying vendors, etc. This may be the same as the Project Manager.

**Grant Administration:** Activities necessary to directly implement the grant, such as compiling and writing required grant reports, documenting expenditures, requesting payment, etc.

**Grant Agreement:** The legal document containing the project description, budget, and other legal requirements.

**Grant Funds:** All funds originating from State's Outdoor Heritage Funds and awarded through the CPL Grant program.

**Grantee:** An applicant who has been awarded grant funds.

**Initial Development Plan (IDP):** Required for all acquisitions that will be transferred to the DNR. An IDP may be required by other entities as well. This plan discusses the cost, responsibility, and timing of initial work needed to bring new properties up to agency standards, as well as who is responsible for this work. Work may include surveying, posting boundaries, parking lot and access development, habitat development, etc. An IDP must be part of the application for acquisition projects. All costs are eligible to be paid for with grant funds.

**Land Manager:** Person responsible for the long-term management of the land that will be acquired or the land where work will take place. Every parcel of land has a Land Manager. The Land Manager provides oversight and input for the grant work but does not do the work. Land Managers also complete the [Land Manager Review and Approval Form](#) (including a Natural Heritage Review) for the project site. For government agencies, this person must be someone authorized to approve the acquisition or work to be done. If the grant involves work on multiple sites, there may be

multiple Land Managers involved with each project. The Land Manager cannot be the same person as the Project Manager.

**Match funds:** Cash or in-kind funds provided by grantee or a partner, as part of the required contributions of non-state origins. In-kind match includes resources that may not be actual cash (supplies, volunteer work, etc.).

**Project (Grant) Manager:** Person responsible for applying for and managing the grant. Grant management includes making sure the work being done meets all grant program requirements, is completed in a timely manner, and is completed as proposed. The Project Manager coordinates with the Land Manager, but cannot be the same person.

**Work Plan:** The final, approved version of the grantee's application that specifies the work to be completed, who will do the work, the budget, timeline, and other details. The Work Plan must include quantifiable project deliverables (acres, miles, etc.), so that outcomes can be accurately measured. The Work Plan will be attached to and incorporated into the grant agreement.

## VI. Budget Definitions

**Contracts:** Include all contracted professional or service work associated with projects that are not included in personnel above. Examples include burn crews, tree removal, and seed planting.

**DNR Land Acquisition Costs:** Costs associated with appraisal review, negotiators time, title, and legal fees that are necessary to support the land acquisition process for parcels to be ultimately conveyed to the DNR. The average cost per parcel is estimated to be \$4,000.

**Easement Acquisition:** The price paid for the acquisition of permanent easement on real property. Do not include personnel costs or other professional services fees necessary for the acquisition. Those should be listed in the appropriate categories.

**Equipment/Tools/Supplies:** Costs for equipment, tools or supplies directly related to the project. Most equipment should be rented or leased, not purchased. Supplies include fencing, posts, seed, trees, lumber, etc.

**Fee Acquisition with PILT:** The price paid for the fee interest in real property that will have future PILT requirements. Do not include personnel costs or other professional services fees necessary for the fee acquisition. Those should be listed in the appropriate categories.

**Fee Acquisition without PILT:** The price paid for the fee interest in real property that will not have future PILT requirements. Do not include personnel costs or other professional services fees necessary for the fee acquisition. Those should be listed in the appropriate categories.

**Personnel:** Costs for paid staff directly related to and necessary for grant work. The staff must be employees of the grantee's organization. Costs may include salary and fringe. Grant administration costs may not exceed 2.5 percent of grant funds requested. On-the-ground personnel costs may not exceed 5 percent of the grant amount requested.

**Professional Services:** Costs associated with appraisals, surveys, design, engineering, legal fees, etc. that are necessary to support the project. Do not include these costs in other line items.

**PILT:** Payments in lieu of taxes (PILT) is a local governmental aid payment for state owned natural resource lands that is made by the state to counties, townships, and some school districts.

**Travel:** Expenses related to travel in Minnesota directly necessary for the success of the project, including mileage, lodging, parking and per diem expenses.

## VII. Program Contacts

Grant program webpage: <http://www.mndnr.gov/cpl>

Grant program email: [LSCPLgrants.DNR@state.mn.us](mailto:LSCPLgrants.DNR@state.mn.us)

Grant program staff:

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### VIII. Evaluation Criteria Table

Applications are scored based on the 6 criteria listed below, using only the information provided within the application. Applicants should be sure their applications contain enough information for reviewers to consider all 6 criteria. Information may be provided on the Project Summary page of the application, or specifically requested on the Project Information page. This table is also available as a stand-alone document on the CPL website.

<b>1</b>	<b>Overall Project Value</b>	
	Critical habitat corridor; habitat quality/quantity	Amount, quality and/or connectivity of habitat restored, protected and/or enhanced
	Consistent with current conservation science	Project use of currently accepted science and methods, increased efficiency and life expectancy of work completed
	Sustainability	Overall life expectancy of project
	Use of native plants	Use of local ecotype, native vegetation in form of seed, seedlings, root stock, etc.
<b>2</b>	<b>Applicant Performance</b>	
	Encouragement of local conservation culture	Applicant's past activities with local community in regards to conservation
	Collaboration and local support	Applicant's current interaction with other groups or agencies; current application support by multiple entities
	Capacity to successfully complete work	Applicant's history of receiving and successfully completing conservation work and grants
<b>3</b>	<b>Project Benefits</b>	
	Multiple benefits	Multiple or diverse species benefits; project directly improves intended species, indirect benefit to others
	Habitat benefits	Multiple or diverse habitat benefits; project directly improves intended habitat, indirect benefit to others
<b>4</b>	<b>Public Benefits</b>	
	Adjacent to protected lands	Project site(s) proximity to current protected land (public or private)
	Public access	Project site(s) availability for hunting, fishing and other wildlife-based recreation.
<b>5</b>	<b>Financial Assessment</b>	
	Full funding of project	All costs are identified and accounted for; all partners have submitted letters committing funds
	Supplements existing funding	Project would not be completed without CPL funding; CPL does not replace traditional sources of funding
	Budget and cost effectiveness	Project is succinct- no unnecessary costs or work has been added; costs are relative to location of project
<b>6</b>	<b>Urgency</b>	
	Urgency	Funding importance at this time: species or opportunity potentially lost