

**Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund
2011-2012 Request for Proposals (RFP)**

Subd: 4j4a

Project Title: 4a - HCP 7 - WMA/WPA Acquisition beyond Boundaries

Category: D. Land Acquisition for Habitat and Recreation

Total Project Budget: \$ 430,000

Proposed Project Time Period for the Funding Requested: 3 yrs, July 2011 - June 2014

Other Non-State Funds (secured): \$ 0

Summary:

Pheasants Forever will acquire in fee-title and restore 85 acres of priority wildlife habitat from willing landowners for inclusion into the State WMA / Federal WPA system utilizing the acquisition beyond boundaries concept.

Name: Joe Pavelko

Sponsoring Organization: Pheasants Forever, Inc.

Address: 7975 Acorn Circle

Victoria MN 55386

Telephone Number: 612-532-3800

Email jpavelko@pheasantsforever.org

Web Ad www.pheasantsforever.org

Location:

Region: Central, SW, SE

Ecological Section: Minnesota and NE Iowa Morainal (222M), North Central Glaciated Plains (251B)

County Name: Big Stone, Lac qui Parle, Le Sueur, Rice, Swift, Todd, Waseca

City / Township:

2011-2012 MAIN PROPOSAL

PROJECT TITLE: HCP7-4a – WMA/WPA Acquisition beyond Boundaries

I. PROJECT STATEMENT

The pressures from development, industry, and agriculture continue to mount on wildlife habitat within the farmland regions of Minnesota. Last year, 70,000 acres of Conservation Reserve Program expired. In fact, despite all of the investments in conservation, many of the agricultural counties are continuing to experience a net loss of habitat. Now, more than ever, is the time to accelerate our investments in permanently protected, high quality habitat complexes that will protect and maintain Minnesota's wildlife populations. In addition, as people spend more time indoors, it is fundamental to provide quality outdoor experiences to ensure Minnesota's outdoor heritage and appreciation of the outdoors is passed on.

Acknowledging the fact that current conservation funding levels won't fully address our habitat conservation needs, it is imperative that our limited funding resources be invested as strategic as possible to maximize a wide array of benefits for not only wildlife, but for other benefits such as water quality, native species protection, and outdoor recreational opportunities. State Wildlife Management Areas and Federal Waterfowl Production Areas not only provide quality wildlife habitat, improve water quality, and provide a myriad of other environmental benefits, but they provide quality public recreation opportunities so important to the citizens of our state.

One way to prioritize and to maximize benefits is to acquire parcels where the footprint of the strategic acquisition is larger than the acquisition boundary itself. For example, the acquisition of a 40 acre WMA adjacent to the original WMA shares an 80 acre drained wetland. Acquiring the property would not only provide 40 acres of additional habitat, but would also enable an 80 acre wetland restoration. The footprint of the 40 acre acquisition is 80 acres. In another example, 100 acres of cropland drains into a large wetland within a 160 acre WPA acquisition. Not only does the acquisition provide 160 acres of additional habitat, but 100 acres of additional watershed is being treated and improving water quality. The overall footprint of the 160 acre acquisition is 260 acres.

A total of 140 acres of priority wildlife habitat (85 acres with ENRTF funds and 55 acres with non-state matching funds) will be acquired utilizing this method. Once acquired, these lands will be restored to the highest quality and comprehensive as practicable utilizing ENRTF grant funds and matching funds respectively.

II. DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT ACTIVITIES

Activity 1: Fee-Title Acquisition

Budget: \$ 430,000

Within the designated HCP work areas, Pheasants Forever will acquire 85 acres in fee title and restore using ENRTF funds (an additional 55 acres will be acquired and restored with \$275,000 in non-state funds) with the footprint of each parcel larger than the legal property boundaries of the acquisitions. Acquired tracts will be transferred to the DNR as part of the Wildlife Management Area system or to the US Fish and Wildlife Service for enrollment into the National Wildlife Refuge System as Waterfowl Production Areas.

In addition to the footprint requirement, all acquisitions will provide public access and will meet one or more of the following criteria:

- Protect native remnant prairie.
- Protect wetland/prairie complexes.
- Adjacent to permanently protected lands and will provide connectivity.
- Will enable the restoration of croplands to wetland/prairie complexes.
- Will enable the restoration of adjacent permanently protected lands.

PF will work with DNR and/or USFWS land managers to develop and implement restoration and management plans that will meet all ENRTF requirements. Restoration of the acquired tracts will be funded with ENRTF grant dollars in this proposal. County board approval will be obtained for all acquisitions before closing.

Outcome	Completion Date
1. Acquire 85 acres fee-title	June 30, 2013
2. Restore 85 acres	June 30, 2013

III. PROJECT STRATEGY

A. Project Team/Partners

Pheasants Forever will receive ENRTF dollars for 85 acres of fee-title acquisition, related acquisition expenses such as appraisals, and restoration work. PF will work with other Habitat Conservation Partners to the extent practical. Pheasants Forever will continue to work closely with the MN DNR and the USFWS to ensure all land acquisition obligations are met. All aspects of the acquisition process will be managed and completed by Pheasants Forever. Additional funding partners include private land owners, local PF chapters, conservation groups, and various units of state and local government.

B. Timeline Requirements

We anticipate completing 3 appraisals by June 30, 2012 and closing on all acquisitions by June 30, 2013. Soon after acquisition, initial development work will be completed by the DNR (HCP partner 2g) to bring the lands to minimum required standards and ecological restoration work will be completed by PF.

C. Long-Term Strategy and Future Funding Needs

This project is part of Pheasants Forever's sustained effort of strategically acquiring WMAs and WPAs that provide high quality wildlife and habitat with multiple benefits that are open to the public for wildlife dependant recreation. All lands acquired will be donated to the State of Minnesota for enrollment into the WMA system or will be donated to the USFWS for enrollment into the National Wildlife Refuge System as Federal Waterfowl Production Areas. For each parcel, an IDP will be developed and implemented in collaboration with the appropriate land management agency and all ecological restoration will be completed through this grant.

These strategic acquisitions also move to address several goals outlined in existing habitat/resource plans including: Aquatic Management Area Plan, Wildlife Management Area Plan, Statewide Duck Recovery Plan, Minnesota Pheasant Plan, Statewide Conservation and Preservation Plan, and several others.

2011-2012 Detailed Project Budget

HCP7-4a WMA/WPA Acquisition beyond Boundaries - Pheasants Forever

IV. TOTAL TRUST FUND REQUEST BUDGET (2 years)

<u>BUDGET ITEM</u>	<u>AMOUNT</u>
Personnel: Staff expenses including salaries and benefits (.35 FTE Total - 72% salary, 28% benefits) Director of Conservation/Field Coordinator: Joe Pavelko/Matt Holland (\$10,000) .1 FTE Regional Biologists: Eran Sandquist/Scott Roemhildt (\$10,000) .15 FTE Grant Department Staff National Office Grant Department (\$5,000) .1 FTE	\$ 25,000
Acquisition (Fee Title): Includes purchase price, title work, surveys, appraisals, etc.	\$ 363,000
Restoration: Restoration work for all acquired lands which may include prairie seeding, wetland restoration, tree removal, exotic species control, etc. This is 10% of the acquisition budget and is only used to budget. Depending on the acquisition tract, the restoration funds needed to complete the restoration may be higher or lower.	\$ 40,000
Travel: Mileage of PF personnel for land acquisitions and restoration work (approximately 1000 miles @ .50/mile)	\$ 2,000
TOTAL ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES TRUST FUND \$ REQUEST	\$ 430,000

V. OTHER FUNDS

<u>SOURCE OF FUNDS</u>	<u>AMOUNT</u>	<u>Status</u>
Other Non-State \$ Being Applied to Project During Project Period: Funds from other grant sources such as NAWCA, private donations, local PF chapter contributions, and other conservation group contributions	\$ 275,000	<i>Pending</i>
Other State \$ Being Applied to Project During Project Period:	\$ -	<i>NA</i>
In-kind Services During Project Period:	\$ -	<i>NA</i>
Remaining \$ from Current ENRTF Appropriation (if applicable): 2009 - \$285,630	\$ 285,630	<i>Unspent and Committed</i>
Funding History: 2001 - \$1,230,000; 2003 - \$549,300; 2005 - \$404,300; 2007 - \$450,000; 2008 - \$350,000; 2009 - \$350,000	\$ 3,333,600	

2011-2012 Acquisition List for Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund Proposal

Project Title: : HCP7-4a WMA/WPA Acquisition beyond Boundaries

Project Manager Name: Joe Pavelko

Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund \$ Request: \$ 450,869

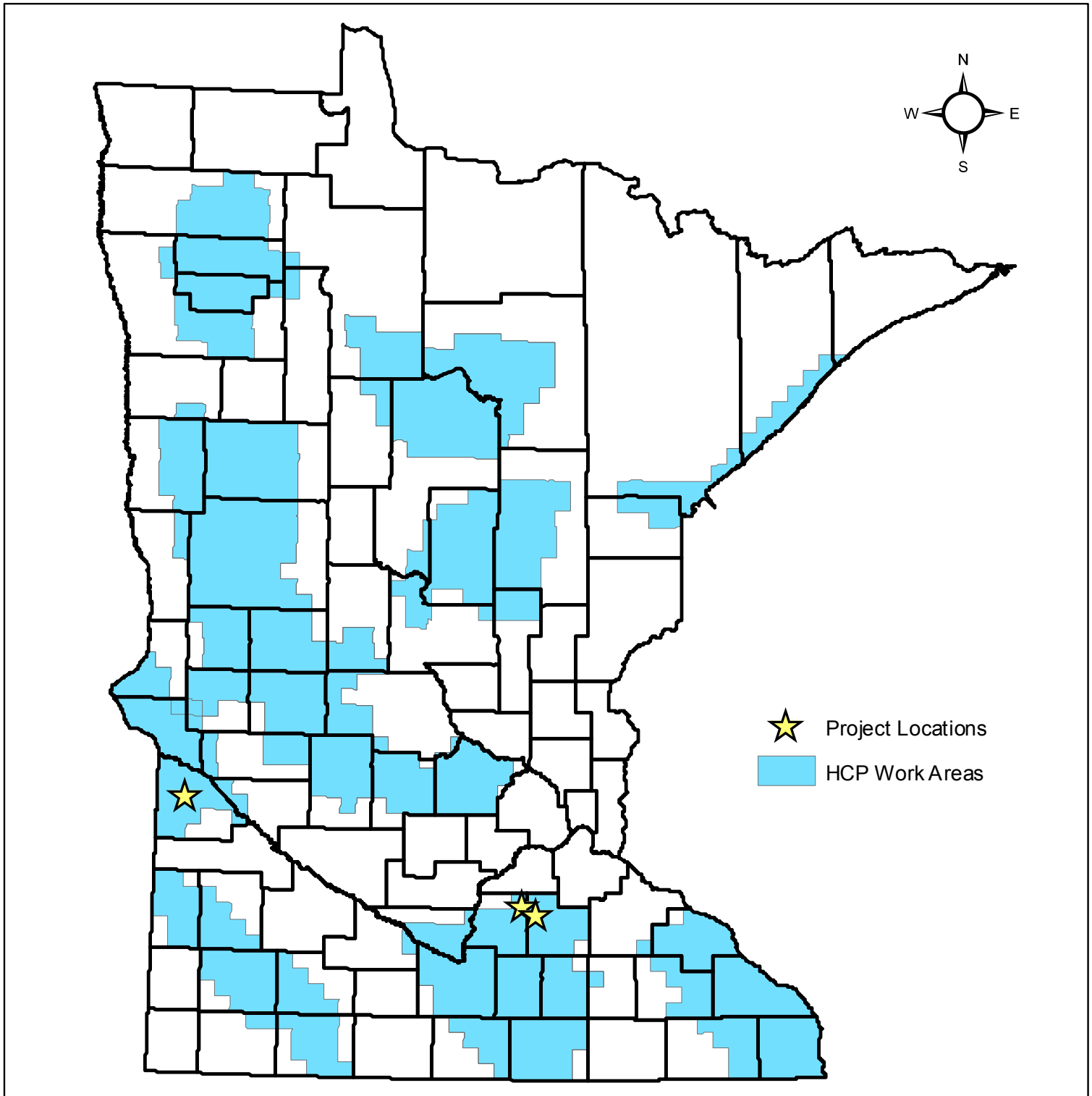
Final Title Holder(s): MN DNR / USFWS

#	Parcel Name	Acquisition Type (Fee-Title OR Conservation Easement)	County	Estimated # of Acres	Geographical Coordinates (Provide Latitude/Longitude OR UTM-X/UTM-Y)				Description	Status
					Latitude	Longitude	UTM-X	UTM-Y		
1	Erin Prairie WPA Addition	Fee-Title	Rice	80			463567	4919334	Approximately 80 acres directly adjacent to an existing WPA/WMA complex in Rice County. Acquisition will allow the restoration of shared wetland, will greatly improve water quality of large wetland within the habitat complex, and will provide additional upland nesting habitat.	In negotiations
2	Lake Sanborn WMA	Fee-Title	LeSueur	160			455411	4924534	Approximately 160 acres on the west end of Lake Sanborn, a DNR designated wildlife lake. Purchasing the property will allow for wetland and upland restoration and will give DNR legal access to the outlet of the lake to install a water control structure so it can be managed. Engineering work is underway.	In negotiations
3	Madrena WMA Addition	Fee-Title	Lac Qui Parle	173			245473	4993419	This is considered a very important addition to a wetland complex. The main basin is partially drained. This is part of the HCP project focus area. Approx 51 acres in 2 wetland basins. Upland acres would be seeded to grass to promote waterfowl nesting habitat. Not part of the original project area. Adjacent to existing WMA.	In negotiations
<p>NOTES: This is Pheasants Forever's potential project list. Projects may be removed from the list and new projects may be added depending on landowner interest, ecological value of new parcels, etc.</p>										



HCP7-4a WMA/WPA Acquisition beyond Boundaries Project Map

Habitat Conservation Partnership - Phase 7



Pheasants Forever, Inc. – Organization Description and Project Manager Qualifications

Organization Description

Pheasants Forever is a non-profit 501(c)3 conservation organization dedicated to improving pheasant and other wildlife populations through habitat restoration and development, changes in land management policies and public awareness and education. Pheasants Forever was incorporated in 1982 here in Minnesota and was established out of concern for the decline in pheasant populations. Today, Pheasants Forever has over 115,000 members and 650 chapters nationwide doing grassroots conservation. In Minnesota, Pheasants Forever has 22,000 members and 76 chapters. Since inception, Pheasants Forever in Minnesota has spent over \$16,000,000 on conservation resulting in the development of over 40,000 acres of nesting cover, 62,000 acres of food plots, 9,000 acres of wetlands, and 17,000 acres of land acquisition. PF in Minnesota has also planted 3.2 million trees.

Project Manager Qualifications

Joe Pavelko, MN Director of Conservation Programs
Pheasants Forever, Inc.

7975 Acorn Circle, Victoria, MN 55386

B.A. Biology – St. Olaf College – Northfield, MN, 2004

B.A. Environmental Studies – St. Olaf College – Northfield, MN, 2004

Restoration Ecology Certificate – University of Idaho – Moscow, ID, 2009



Also, the project manager administered or is currently administering the following grants:
LSOHC Prairie Heritage Fund, LSOHC WPA Acceleration, Small NAWCA Grants, Standard NAWCA Grants, CPL Grants, HCP Phase V, VI, VI Supplement.

Previous Work Experience

Friends of the MN Valley – Conservation Projects Manager, 2007 – 2009

MN Valley NWR Trust, Inc. – Conservation Projects Manager, 2006 – 2009

