

Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund 2009 Phase 1 Request for Proposals (RFP)

LCCMR ID: B14.21

Project Title: HCP - Pelican Lake WMA & WPA Acquisition Acceleration (5a)

Total Project Budget: \$ \$1,000,000

Proposed Project Time Period for the Funding Requested: July 2009 - June 2010 (1 yr)

Other Non-State Funds: \$ 500,000

First Name: Jon

Last Name: Schneider

Sponsoring Organization: Ducks Unlimited, Inc.

Address: 311 East Lake Geneva Road NE
Alexandria MN 56308

Telephone Number: 320-762-9916

Email: jschneider@ducks.org

Fax: 320-759-1567

Web Address: www.ducks.org

Region:	County Name:	City / Township:
Statewide	Statewide	

Summary: HCP requests \$1 million to leverage \$500,000 in federal funds and \$2.5 million in state funds to accelerate the acquisition, protection and restoration of 300 acres of Pelican Lake shoreland.

Main Proposal: 0808-1-053-proposal-DU HCP Phase VI Pelican Lake Acceleration Proposal.doc

Project Budget: 0808-1-053-budget-DU HCP Phase VI Pelican Lake Acceleration Budget.xls

Qualifications: 0808-1-053-qualifications-DU Manager Qualifications & Organization Description.doc

Map: 0808-1-053-maps-Pelican Lake Map.doc

Letter of Resolution: 0808-1-053-resolution-DU Board Authorization Letter LCCMR 2008.pdf

MAIN PROPOSAL

PROJECT TITLE: Pelican Lake WMA/WPA Acquisition Acceleration
Minnesota's Habitat Conservation Partnership Phase VI
www.mnhabitatcorridors.org

I. PROJECT STATEMENT:

The mission of the Habitat Conservation Partnership is to restore, enhance and conserve habitat for the purpose of sustaining fish, wildlife and plant communities for all generations. Minnesota's Habitat Conservation Partnership (Partnership), formerly the Habitat Corridors Partnership, was formed in 2000 to provide a framework for statewide land conservation in partnership with the Environmental Trust Fund. The work of the Partnership has three main objectives: 1) **Partnership**: working together to accelerate existing programs and identify new opportunities that build upon our existing investments in habitat. 2) **Focus**: The Phase VI proposal will work in nine project areas encompassing 27,442 mi². All work proposed will occur within the identified project areas. These areas were identified as focus areas where resource conservation priorities and opportunity overlap 3) **Leverage**: the objective of this partnership is to bring more resources to bear on Minnesota's conservation need by identifying non-state contributions to accelerate habitat conservation by maximizing the results from limited funding through the Environmental Trust Fund.

In this proposal, HCP partners will work together to use \$1,000,000 in new LCCMR grant funds to accelerate the protection and restoration of small wetlands and uplands around 4,000-acre Pelican Lake in Wright County. This effort will leverage \$2.5 million in other state funds and \$500,000 in federal funds to accelerate the acquisition of land for DNR and US Fish & Wildlife Service on Pelican Lake, effectively protecting and restoring approximately 30% of the lake's shoreland. Pelican Lake near St. Michael in Wright County is one of the 40 shallow lakes legally designated by DNR for active wildlife management purposes due to its shallow nature and historically heavy use by waterfowl and hunters. At 4,000 acres, Pelican is vast but maximum depths average only about 5 feet. Pelican Lake has no naturally functioning outlet at this time, but has been growing in depth and size in recent years due to landscape drainage and increased precipitation levels in the last decade. As a result, the lake has not experienced a winterkill of fish in recent years and has become turbid due to an abundance of black bullheads and other invasive fish.

Of more immediate concern, however, is the rapid pace of housing development moving west and south towards Pelican Lake from the sprawling cities of St. Michael and Albertville to the east and Monticello to the north. Despite strong local land use protection measures such as a 1,000 foot setback rule and strong support from Wright County to protect this shallow lake, land around Pelican Lake is under pressure from lake shore development speculators and advancing lot/block developments that are advancing from the north and east towards the lake. To help remedy the situation, MNDNR and the USFWS are working in concert with Wright County to buy and restore as much shoreland around the lake as possible to reduce the flow of water and nutrients into the lake, and are working with Ducks Unlimited and other partners to engineer and construct a managed outlet on the lake to alleviate flooding and active manage water levels in the lake to rejuvenate aquatic plants and improve water quality. However, land values in this developing area of Wright County are very high, and wildlife agencies need financial assistance to help purchase the remaining private lands in cultivation around the lake.

Thus, this proposal is to accelerate the rate of shoreland and lakeshed land acquisition and restoration on Pelican Lake by infusing \$1 million from the Minnesota Environment & Natural Resource Trust Fund into current land acquisition efforts. Three tracts of land totaling approximately 300 acres on the east side of Pelican Lake near St. Michael are currently being pursued by the Minnesota DNR and USFWS for acquisition and restoration. Once acquired and restored, these tracts along with existing federal and state lands will protect nearly one-third of the entire lake shore around Pelican Lake. The cost of these lands are very high (estimated

\$13,000/acre), however, due to proximity of sprawling St. Michael and to the Twin Cities metropolitan area, and the limited amount of shoreland property available for development.

II. DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT RESULTS

Result 1: Acquisition Acceleration of Pelican Lake WMAs/WPAs

Budget: \$1,000,000

Description: HCP partners will work together to help Minnesota DNR and US Fish & Wildlife Service secure three additional tracts on Pelican Lake by using grant funds to accelerate state acquisition efforts and leverage federal funds to help protect and restore Pelican Lake's eastern shoreland and immediate lakeshed.

Deliverables

Completion Date

1. Acquire and restore 300 on Pelican Lake in Wright County

June 2010

III. PROJECT STRATEGY AND TIMELINE

A. Project Partners

This proposal is part of the Habitat Conservation Partnership Phase VI Proposal. Please see the main proposal for a complete list of partners involved. All HCP partners are aware of the time sensitive nature of the Pelican Lake project, and all will be invited to assist in the accelerated effort to protect and restore Pelican Lakes immediate watershed. HCP partners will work together in concert to spend these grant funds in the most effective and efficient manner to protect Pelican Lake.

B. Project Impact

Pelican Lake is located in close proximity to the Twin Cities metro area and Interstate 94, and therefore to the majority of Minnesotans that will be able to use the lake for outdoor recreation. These uses include fishing, hunting, and bird watching. Due to its large size and very shallow nature, Pelican Lake is hugely important for migrating and breeding waterfowl and other waterbirds. Annually, it is used by thousands of migrating waterfowl, and hundreds of hunters and anglers. It is also home to one of the largest concentrations of American white pelicans, grebes, and other colonial nesting water birds. Periodically, Pelican Lake also supports a boom-bust fishery that provides angling opportunities for crappie, bass, bluegill, northern pike, and other game fish.

C. Time We propose a twelve month grant beginning July 1, 2009 and ending on June 30, 2010.

D. Long-Term Strategy

This unique Partnership exists as a result of the desire of LCCMR to encourage conservation partners to work together as a statewide collaboration to focus resources and bring additional funds to Minnesota's wildlife habitat resources. We are 18 formal partner agencies and organizations recognized for an ability to achieve the mission of restoring, enhancing and conserving habitat for the purpose of sustaining fish, wildlife and native plant communities for all generations.

HCP partners will continue working to protect and enhance Pelican Lake long into the future, including continued shoreland acquisition and restoration as well as engineering and construction of temporary draw-down capability for the lake. All lands acquired and restored on the lake will be permanently protected and managed by either Minnesota DNR or US Fish & Wildlife Service.

Project Budget

Habitat Conservation Partnership
Pelican Lake Acquisition & Restoration Acceleration

IV. TOTAL PROJECT REQUEST BUDGET

<u>BUDGET ITEM</u>	<u>AMOUNT</u>	<u>% FTE</u>
Personnel:	\$ -	
Contracts:	\$ -	
Equipment/Tools:	\$ -	
Acquisition (Including Easements):	\$ 1,000,000	
Restoration:	\$ -	
Other:		
TOTAL PROJECT BUDGET REQUEST TO LCCMR	\$ 1,000,000	

V. OTHER FUNDS

<u>SOURCE OF FUNDS</u>	<u>AMOUNT</u>	<u>Status</u>
Remaining \$ From Previous Trust Fund Appropriation (if applicable): No funds were requested or granted for this work program in the past.	\$ -	ETF funds appropriated in Habitat Conservation Partnership (HCP) Phase V (2008) to be spent prior to July 1, 2009
Other Non-State \$ Being Leveraged During Project Period: US Fish & Wildlife Service will spend approximately \$500,000 in federal funds to purchase land on Pelican Lake for a new Waterfowl Production Area.	\$ 500,000	Negotiations are pending.
Other State \$ Being Spent During Project Period: Minnesota DNR will spend approximately \$2,500,000 in state bonding funds on the acquisition of new land for state Wildlife Management Areas on Pelican Lake.	\$ 2,500,000	Negotiations are ongoing.
In-kind Services During Project Period:	\$ -	HCP does not encourage this
Past Spending: No funds were requested or granted for this work program in the past.	\$ -	HCP Phases IV & V

As Conservation Program Manager for Ducks Unlimited in Minnesota since 1999, Jon Schneider is responsible for all public grant management, partner coordination, and conservation program implementation to support Ducks Unlimited's Living Lakes Initiative. This involves significant project and program level coordination with agency partners and field staff, DU field biologists and engineers, DU land protection staff, and both DU support staff and administrators. Jon has been responsible for the development and management of DU's Minnesota conservation budgets totaling over \$2 million annually, and has administered four LCCMR grants, six North American Wetlands Conservation Act (NAWCA) grant, and multiple smaller DNR grants for individual projects since 1999. Jon is a Certified Wildlife Biologist and Professional Wetlands Scientist, and holds a B.S. degree in Business Administration & Biology from the State University of New York College at Oswego and an M.S. degree in Range & Wildlife Management from Texas A&M University.

The mission of Ducks Unlimited is to conserve, restore, and manage wetlands and associated habitats for North American's waterfowl. These habitats also benefit other wildlife and people. The continental vision of Ducks Unlimited is wetlands sufficient to fill the skies with waterfowl today, tomorrow, and forever. In Minnesota and Iowa, Ducks Unlimited is strategically focused on the conservation of shallow lakes through our "Living Lakes" conservation initiative. The vision of DU's Living Lakes Initiative is to establish stepping stones of perpetually protected and managed shallow lake complexes from southern Iowa through northern Minnesota to provide high quality wetland food and habitat resources for waterfowl. The initiative will help preserve this region's rich waterfowling heritage and support conservation of the primary source of its birds, the prairie breeding grounds. Since its founding in 1937, DU has raised more than \$1.6 billion, which has contributed to the conservation of more than 11 million acres of prime wildlife habitat in all 50 states, each of the Canadian provinces, and in key areas of Mexico. In the U.S. Alone, DU has helped to conserve more than 2 million acres of waterfowl habitat. Some 900 species of wildlife live and flourish on DU projects, including many threatened or endangered species. DU conservation staff based in Minnesota work from home offices, and are supported by the Great Plains Regional Office staff in Bismarck, ND, and by DU National Office staff in Memphis, TN.

