

**Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund
2010 Request for Proposals (RFP)**

LCCMR ID: 088-C

Project Title:

RIM Leveraging Federal Funds For Migratory Flyway Conservation

LCCMR 2010 Funding Priority:

C. Habitat Restoration, Enhancement, and Acquisition

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

Proposed Project Time Period for the Funding Requested: 2 years, 2010 - 2012

Other Non-State Funds: \$ \$2,000,000

Summary:

Using RIM permanent easements to protect the migratory bird corridor along the Mississippi River by leveraging state funds with Department of Defense funds.

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Sponsoring Organization: Board of Water and Soil Resources

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Location:

Region: Central

County Name: Morrison

City / Township:

_____ Knowledge Base	_____ Broad App.	_____ Innovation
_____ Leverage	_____ Outcomes	
_____ Partnerships	_____ Urgency	_____ TOTAL

MAIN PROPOSAL

PROJECT TITLE: RIM – Leveraging Federal Funds to Achieve Migratory Flyway Conservation

1. PROJECT STATEMENT: The goal of this project is to protect an important migration route directly adjacent to the Mississippi River, and provide surface water quality and drinking water benefits through easement acquisition around camp Ripley in partnership with the Department of Defense Army Compatible Use Buffer (ACUB) Program. The Mississippi River is one of the principal bird migration flyways of North America. Both game and non-game birds utilize the flyway. The river is also the drinking water source for over 800,000 people in Minneapolis, St. Paul, and St. Cloud. Water quality in the river is generally good as it leaves the northern lakes and forested and transition zones to enter the prairie zone. In addition the river corridor in Morrison and Crow Wing Counties is known to have outstanding biodiversity because it is at the crossroads of the state's ecoregions. The river itself is known for excellent smallmouth bass and muskie fishing in this stretch. Easements in this sensitive riverine corridor provide numerous public benefits. The development of the Brainerd Lakes Area is expanding south and this is a prime opportunity to protect a valuable resource area that could very quickly be converted to rural housing and commercial development.

This project will provide state funds to match the federal Department of Defense funds being invested in a compatible use buffer around the state's Camp Ripley Military Training Facility located in Morrison County. ACUB projects have been organized across the country as a means of reducing encroachment by residential and commercial development adjacent to training facilities. Noise complaints coming from developments adjacent to the training facilities frequently require curtailment of the training regimen.

The Camp Ripley partnership with the MN Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) and the SWCD began in 2006. Since then, BWSR has received \$8,132,500 and has secured a total of 7,186 acres in permanent easements. This unique federal/state/local partnership has secured far more acres at far less money than any other base or camp in the country. To date there has been no state match for the federal funds spent through BWSR to purchase easements. Non-federal match funds will be an important consideration as the Department of Defense allocates future ACUB funding across the country. This fiscal year the potential exists to access at least \$2,000,000 in federal funds. Camp Ripley is the largest employer in Central Minnesota and ACUB has provided us an exciting partnership that allows the state to actively participate in protecting this major employer, while also protecting and acquiring major wildlife habitats at bargain prices, in a critical corridor. (See attached Nokasippi WMA map).

Over 220 landowners to date have indicated their interest in enrolling land in the program. (See the attached project map) Funds are encumbered as quickly as an allocation is announced. Over 45 landowners have already signed applications, with 39 funded thus far. The ability of the local SWCDs to work directly with landowners is a tried and true success story.

II. DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT RESULTS

Result 1: Purchase Easements from willing sellers within Mississippi River priority area
Budget: \$ 1,000,000

In order to target state funds to the highest priority habitats, easement funds would be spent within ACUB priority area 1 (see attached map). Priority area 1 includes the 371 growth corridor and lies immediately east of the Mississippi River. By focusing easement activity west of Highway 371 and east of the River, we could protect a very important bird migration corridor while at the same time meeting the goals of ACUB.

BWSR would work with Morrison and Crow Wing SWCDs and other project partners to acquire easements in similar fashion to the easements acquired over the past three years. State dollars would leverage additional federal funds into Minnesota for the ACUB project.

Deliverable

1. 750 acres of easements
2. ongoing monitoring and inspection of easement sites

Completion Date

6/30/12
ongoing

III. PROJECT STRATEGY

A. Project Team/Partners

Partnering state funds to the Camp Ripley initiative of protecting its borders is unique in the state, and is a national example of combining environmental stewardship with protection of the military's ability to train troops. Camp Ripley recently won the Secretary of Defense national environmental award due to the success of their ACUB program.

Camp Ripley's environmental office is overall coordinator of the ACUB project. The Minnesota DNR and BWSR offer fee title and easement program coordination. The Nature Conservancy, Morrison SWCD, Crow Wing SWCD, and Cass SWCD, and The Trust for Public Land coordinate landowner contacts and present the interested landowners with a variety of land protection options. Morrison, Crow Wing and Cass Counties work with the project to dedicate lands to the program and also coordinate their comprehensive land use plans with ACUB.

B. Timeline

Easements would be taken after July, 2010 and before June 30, 2012. Monitoring and inspection of easement sites would be the ongoing responsibility of the SWCDs as it is with Re-Invest in Minnesota.

C. Long-term Strategy

The Camp Ripley project is a recognized component in the long-term Department of Defense ACUB program. The long-term strategy for ACUB is to achieve compatible uses on 78,000 acres of the 110,000 acre buffer area. To date 22,000 acres of the buffer zone have permanent compatible uses. ACUB projects are envisioned to be continued until reaching their goal.

Project Budget

IV. TOTAL PROJECT REQUEST BUDGET (*two years*)

BUDGET ITEM	AMOUNT
Personnel:	
Securing funds from DOD, Preparing easement documents, Reviewing easement documents. .2 FTE each year for two years. (.0375 %)	\$37,500
Morrison and Crow Wing SWCD's- Promoting the program, meeting with landowners, preparing applications and agreements. .25FTE each year for two years. (.0375 %)	\$37,500
Contracts: N/A	
N/A	\$ -
Equipment/Tools/Supplies: N/A	\$ -
Acquisition: Permanent Easements (92.5%)	\$925,000
Travel: N/A	\$ -
Additional Budget Items: N/A	\$ -
TOTAL PROJECT BUDGET REQUEST TO LCCMR	\$1,000,000

V. OTHER FUNDS

SOURCE OF FUNDS	AMOUNT	Status
Other Non-State \$ Being Applied to Project During Project Period: U.S. Department of Defense	\$2,000,000	<i>Pending</i>
Other State \$ Being Applied to Project During Project Period: N/A		<i>Indicate: Secured or Pending</i>
Remaining \$ from Current Trust Fund Appropriation (if applicable): N/A		<i>Indicate: Unspent? Not Legally Obligated? Other?</i>
Funding History:	\$6,842,389	U.S. Dept. of Defense

ACUB Accomplishments 2004-2008

DNR

- 18 land deals completed/underway
- 2,196 acres
- \$3,349,000

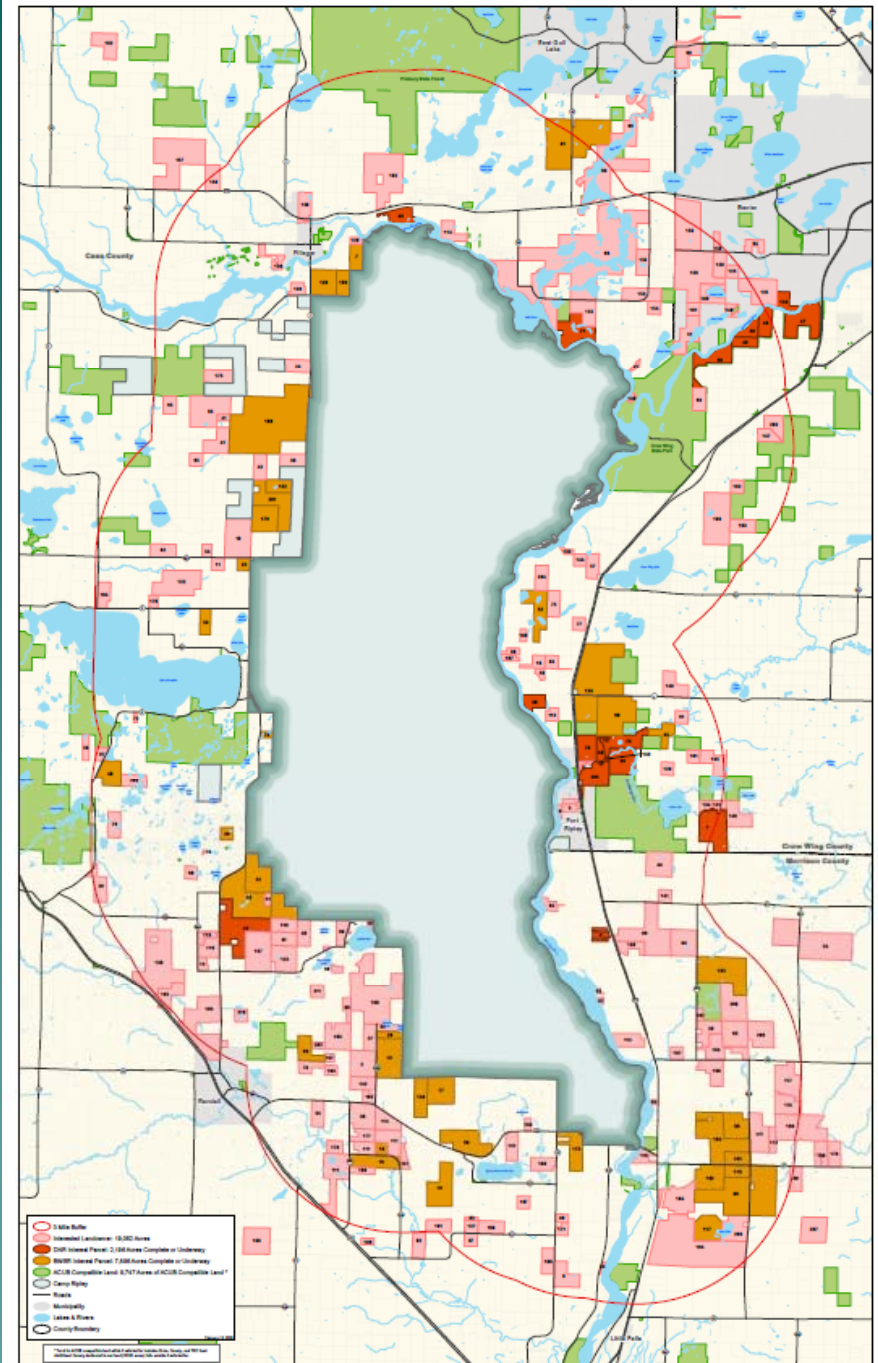
BWSR

- 35 land deals completed/underway
- 7,896 acres
- \$7,382,500

Landowners waiting

- 158 parcels
- 19,097 acres
- \$25 million estimate

Camp Ripley ACUB Initiative



Project Manager Qualifications:

The project manager for the grant will be Dan Steward, BWSR Board conservationist, located in the Brainerd BWSR office. Dan has over 20 years experience in implementing BWSR programs, and working with SWCD's. Dan is the lead BWSR field employee for a 7 county area in north-central Minnesota.

Organization Description:

The MN Board of Water and soil Resources (BWSR) will serve as the lead state agency for this grant. The BWSR has the strongest connection with SWCD's and their implementation role of soil and water conservation practices in MN. The BWSR has historically provided similar grant funds to SWCD's to implement this type of work. We intend to use the existing process to provide financial and administrative oversight.