



Mississippi Headwaters Habitat Corridor Project

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Goal :

- Protect critical fish and wildlife habitat along the first 400 miles of the Mississippi River (the Headwaters), its major tributaries, 9 headwaters lakes and other high quality habitat complexes in the 8 Headwaters counties.

Why Is this Important?

- Clean water habitat for fish and adjacent uplands are home to 350+ species of animals and birds, including most of the endangered and threatened species in Minnesota.
- The river provides critical food and shelter for migratory waterfowl along the Mississippi Flyway.
- To reduce land use changes that could result in fragmentation of critical habitats such as forests, shorelands, grasslands, and wetlands.
- Enhanced public recreational opportunities.



How Is Permanent Fish and Wildlife Habitat Protection Achieved?

Funding OHF:

- **\$12,239,000**
Phases 1-4
- **\$2,901,000**
Phase 5 7/1/2021
- **\$4,717,00**
Phase 6 - proposed
recommendation
10/2021

Clean Water Fund:
\$1,000,000

• **Conservation Easements BWSR + 7 SWCDs**

Permanent protection; no public access

25 RIM easements completed to date

27 RIM easements in process

• **Fee-Title Acquisitions The Trust for Public Land**

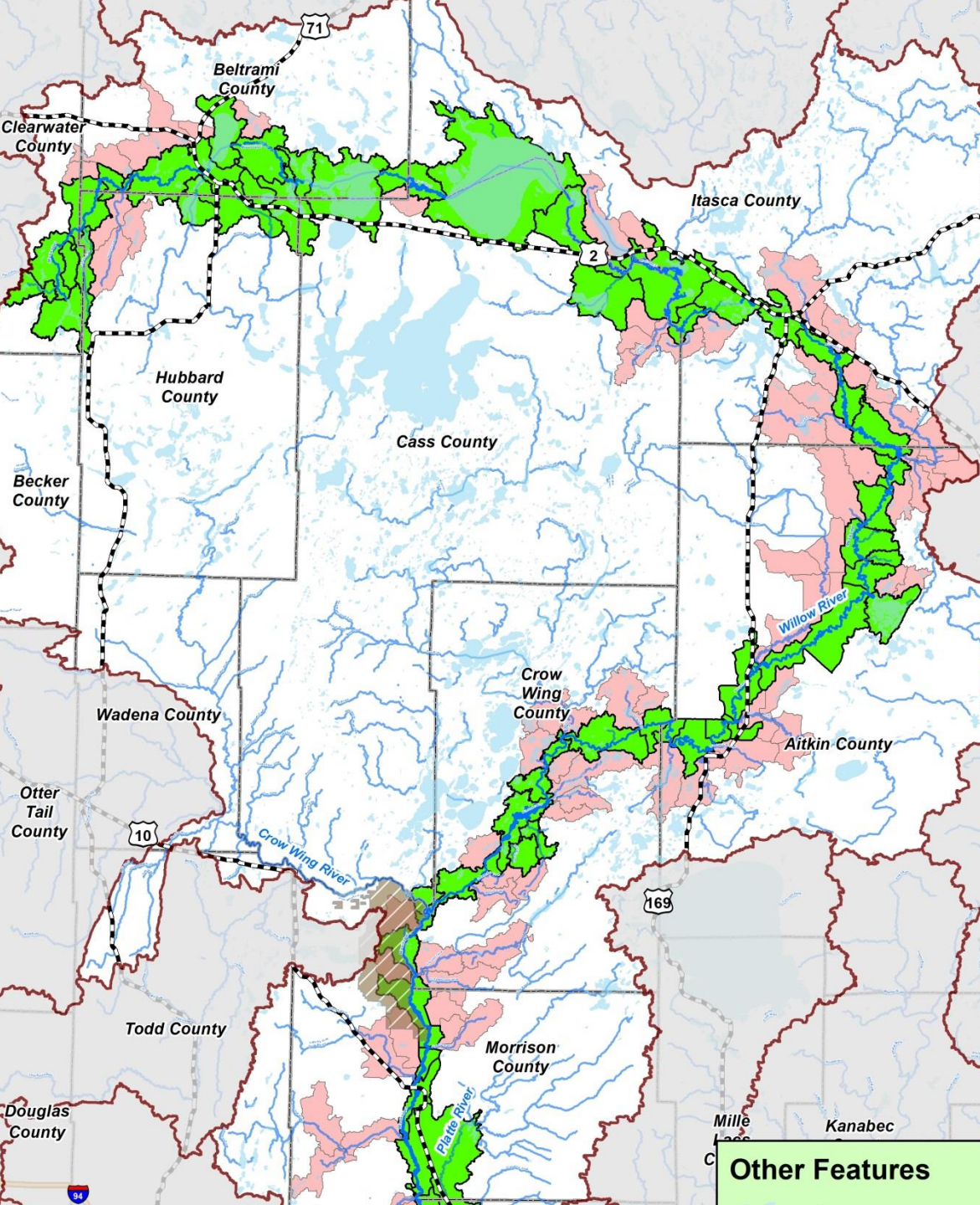
Purchased and conveyed to the DNR or local government

Permanent protection; public access for recreation

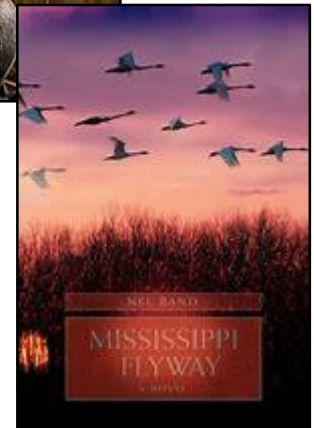
Accomplishments to Date and In Process

- **4,130 acres protected, 34 miles of shoreland**
- In process, 1,701 acres ; 7 miles of shoreland
- ML 21 funding, goal is 1,235 acres, 5 miles shoreland
- CWF \$1 million RIM Buffer Money:
1,000 acres, 7 miles shoreland

Exceeded Project Goals by 250%

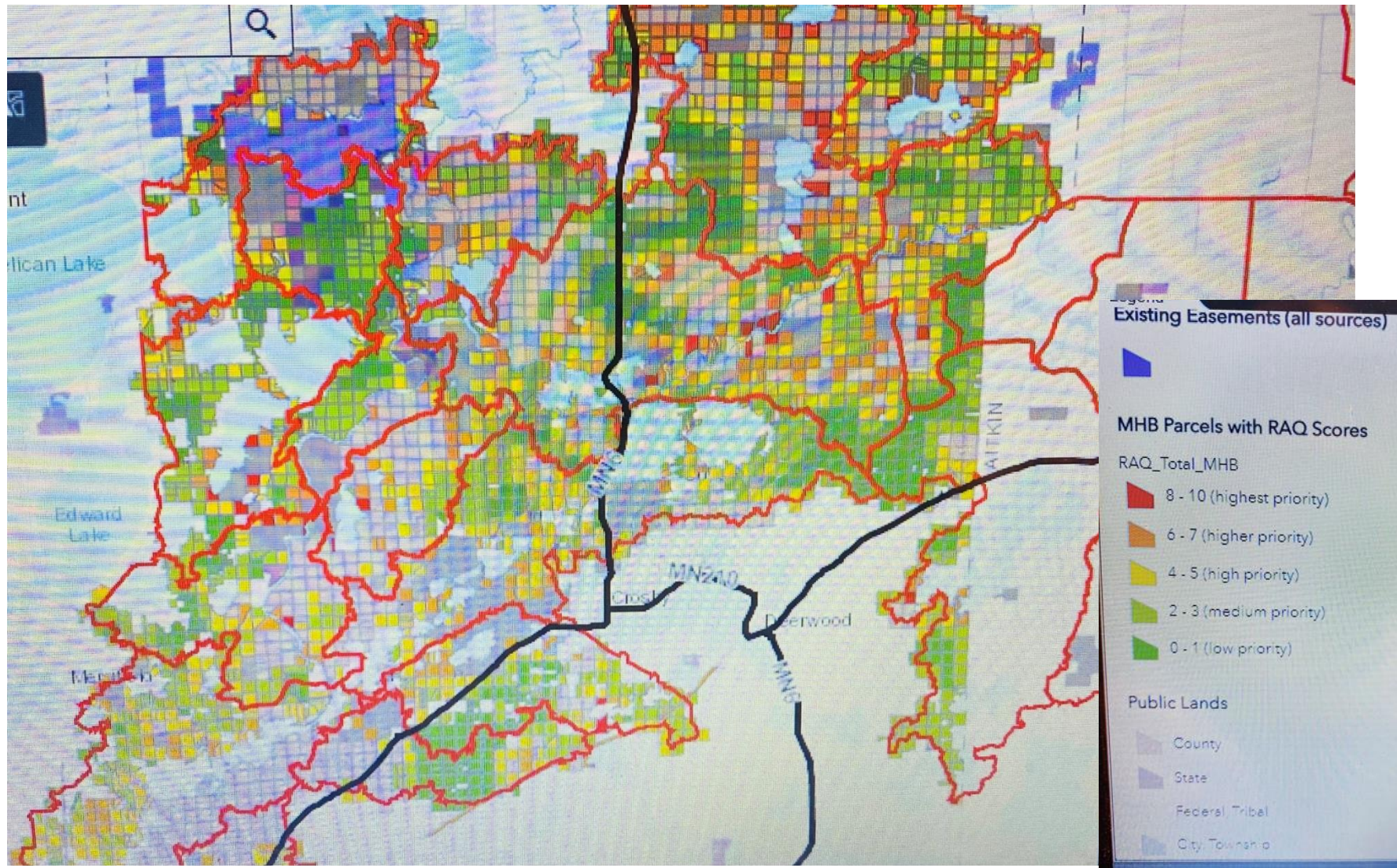


Geographic Focus of the Mississippi Headwaters Habitat Corridor Project



Prioritization of Target Landowners: RAQ Scoring

R= riparian A= adjacency to protected land Q= habitat quality





BWSR RIM Easement Update

Chris Pence
Board Conservationist
October 28, 2021

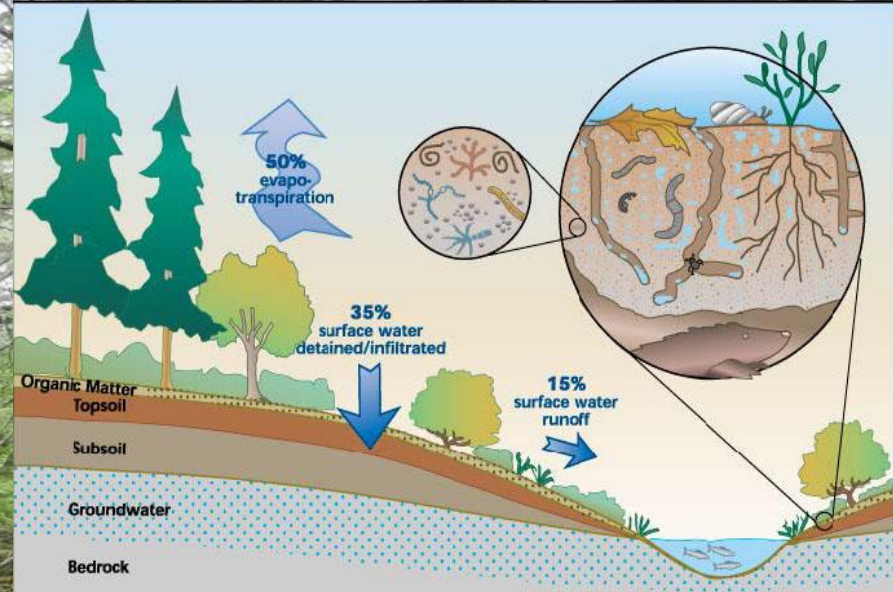


RIM Easements Create and Protect

Habitat Complexes



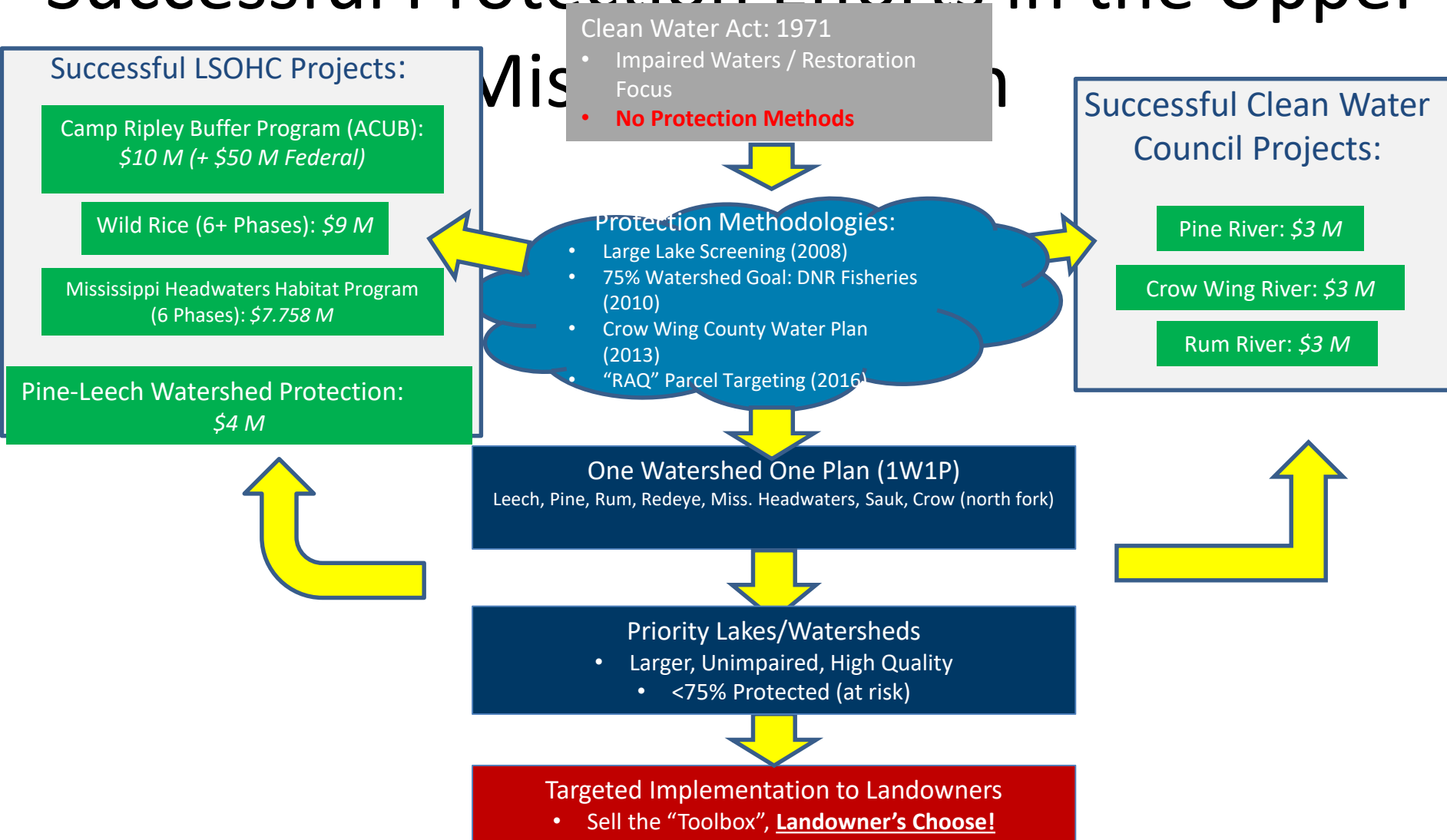
Protect the sponge!



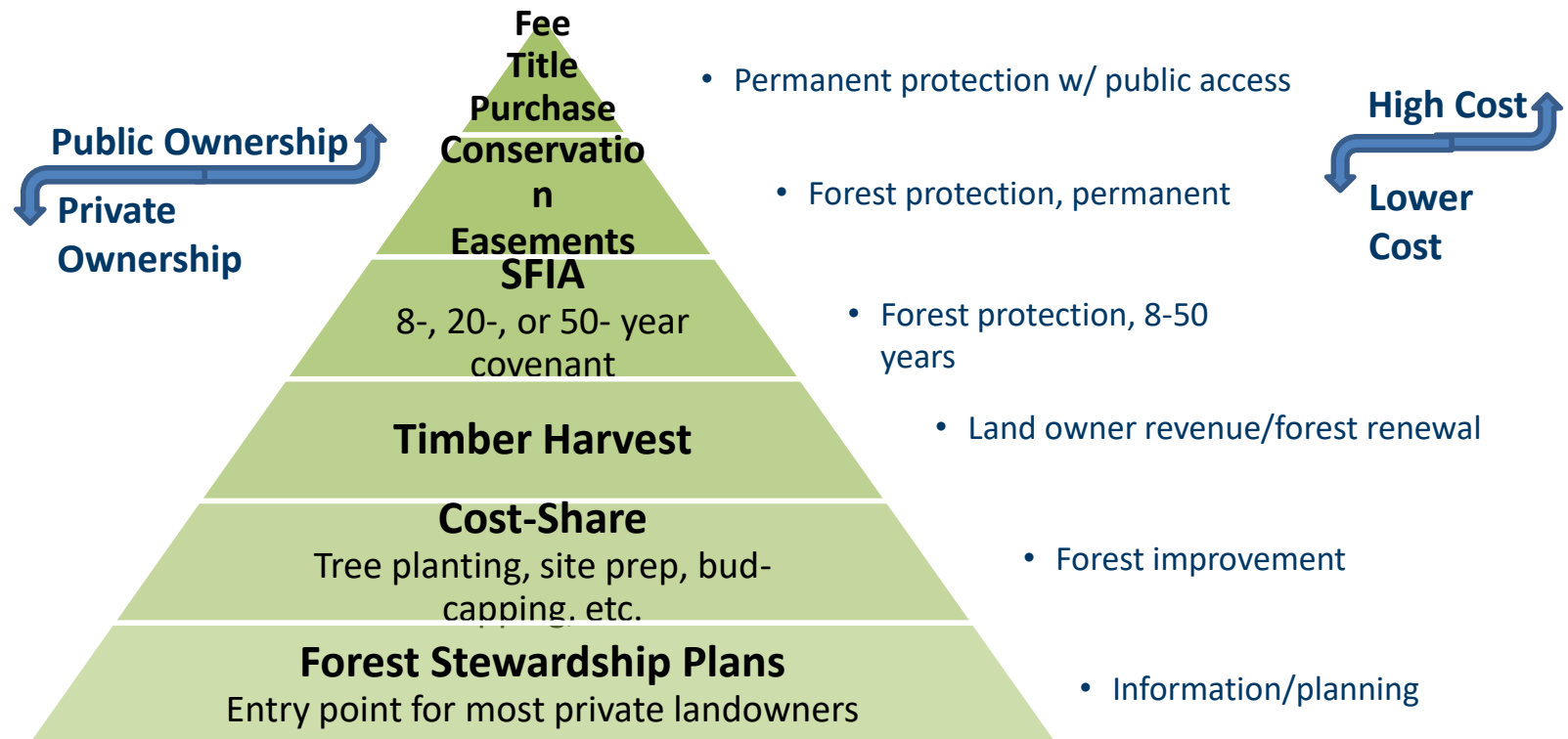
Protection doesn't mean you can't manage!



Habitat and Water Quality Protection: Successful Protection Efforts in the Upper



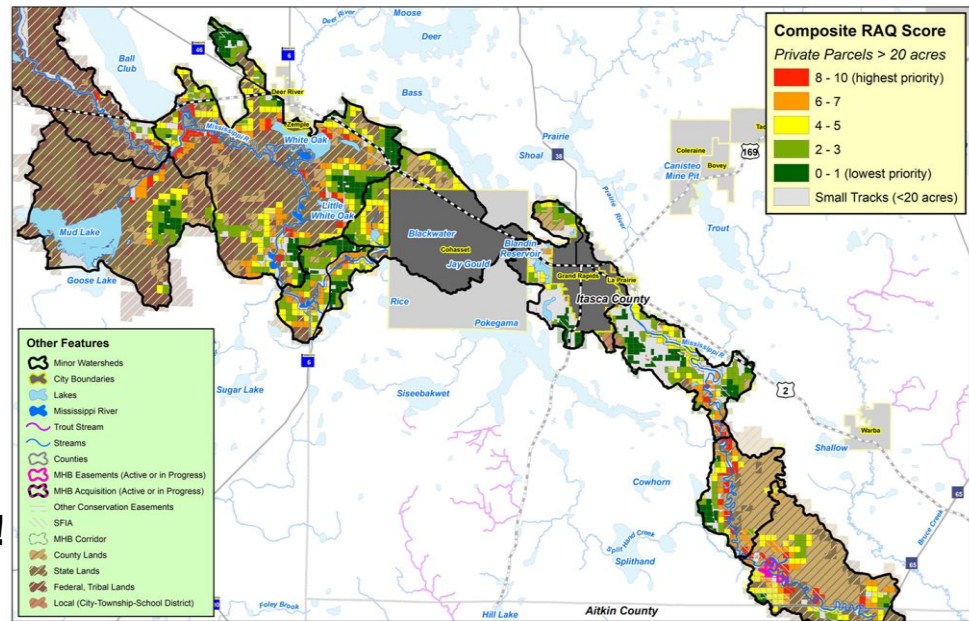
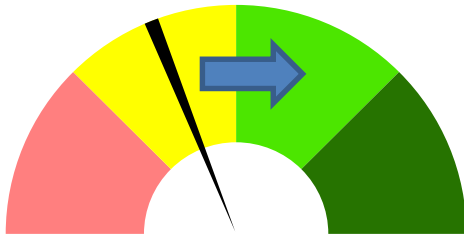
Private Forest Management Tools for Habitat & Water Quality



Prioritize, Target, Measure (PTM)

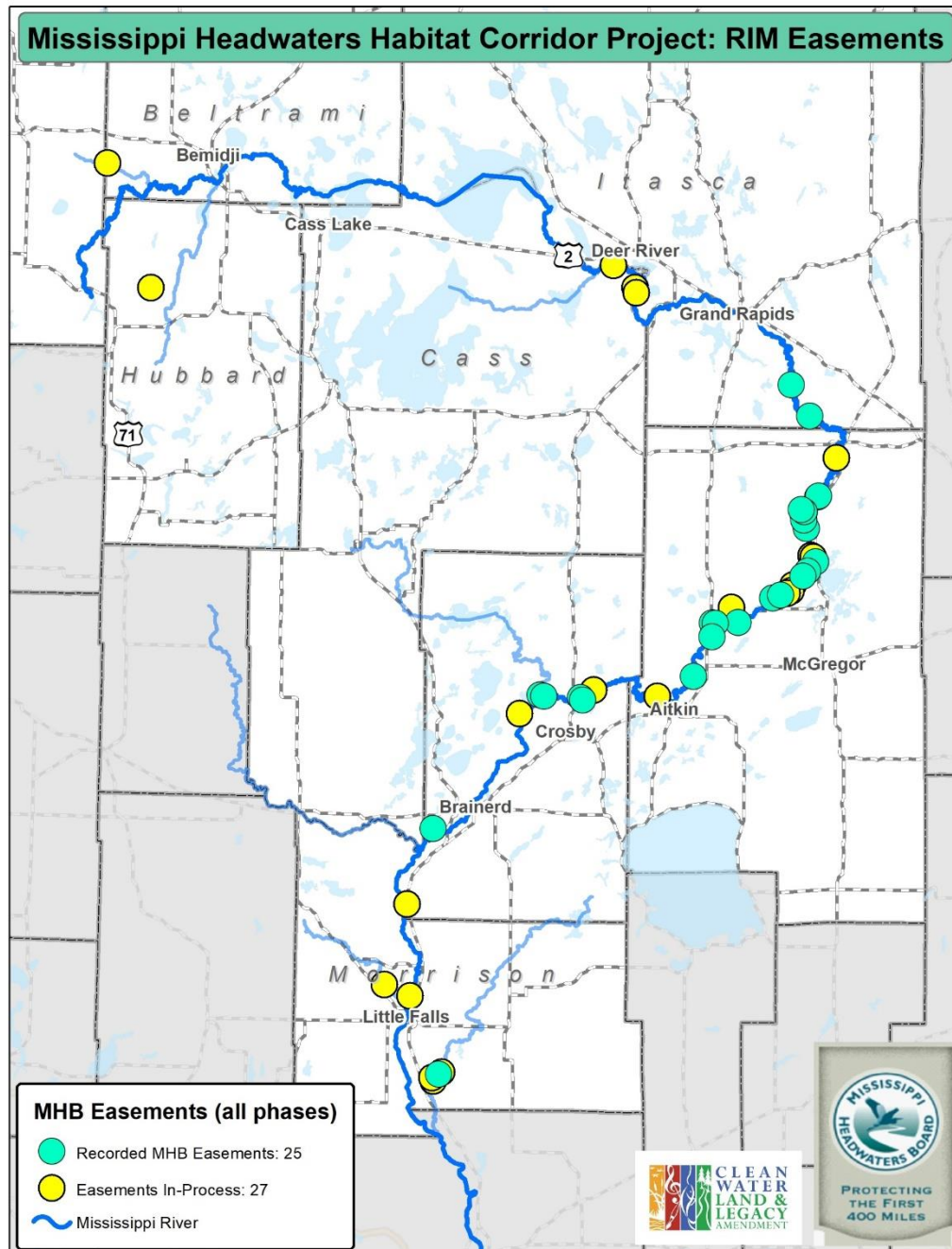
New Legislative Directive: PTM

- Prioritize (by **WATER**)
 - Minor Watersheds (HUC14s) with Important Lakes / River Stretches
- Target (by **LAND**)
 - Private Forest Lands
 - Acreage Threshold (>20 acres)
 - Tool = RAQ
- Measure (by **NEEDLE**)
 - Move the Needle toward Protection!



MT

lap



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Land
for
People



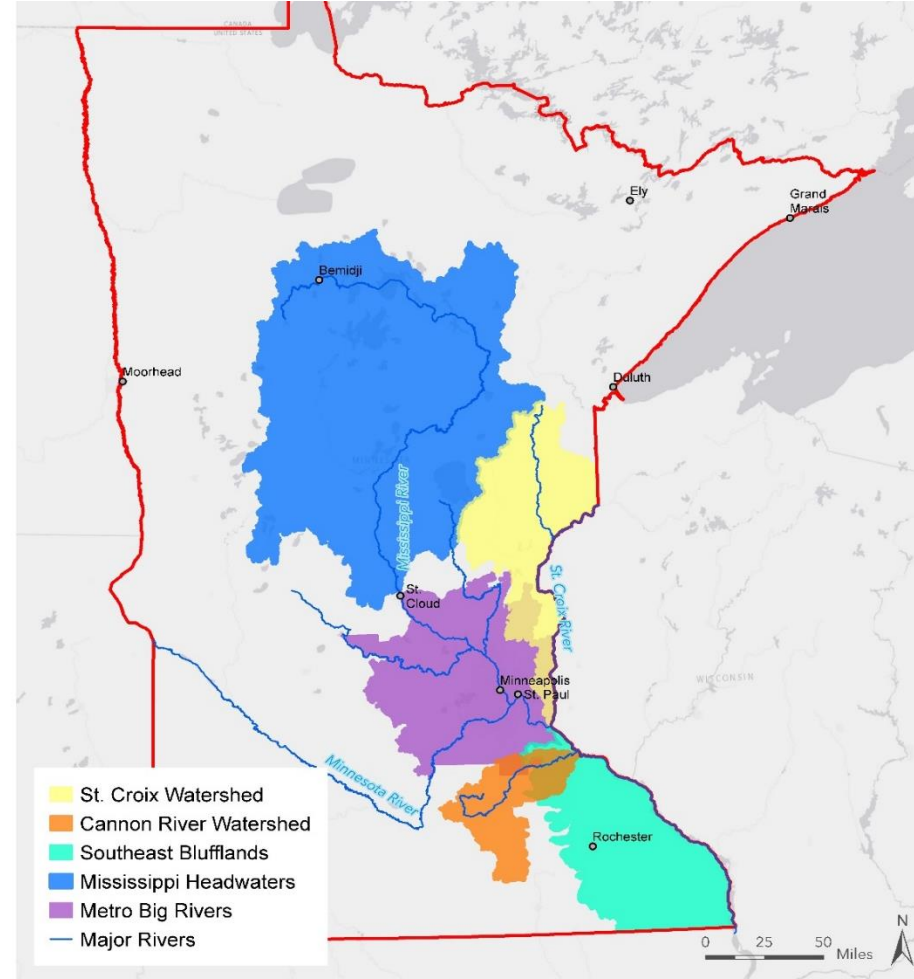
OUR MISSION

The Trust for Public Land creates parks and protects land for people, ensuring healthy, livable communities for generations to come.

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TPL Land Protection

- Our Minnesota's Rivers Program fee-title land protection work focuses on three key criteria:
 - Habitat Preservation
 - Recreation Opportunities
 - Water Quality Protection



Minnesota's Rivers Program

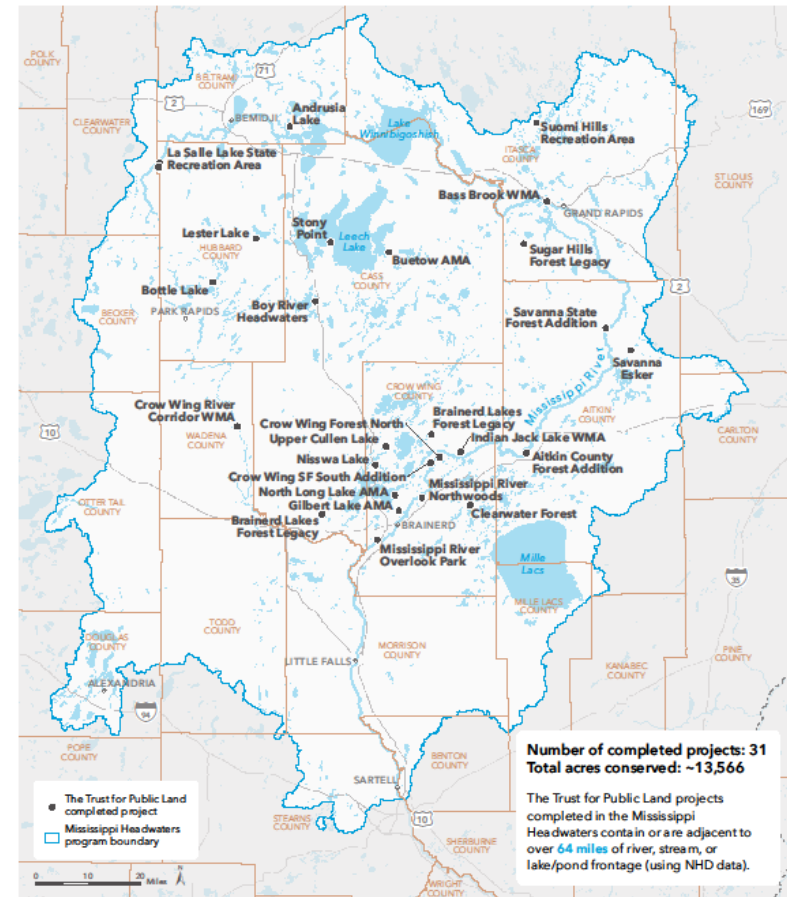
Minnesota's Rivers Sub-Program



Our Work in the Mississippi Headwaters

32 Completed Projects

- Over 3500 acres permanently protected
- 65 miles of shoreline



Mississippi Headwaters

MINNESOTA RIVERS: SUB-PROGRAMS

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Mississippi Headwaters Habitat Corridor Project



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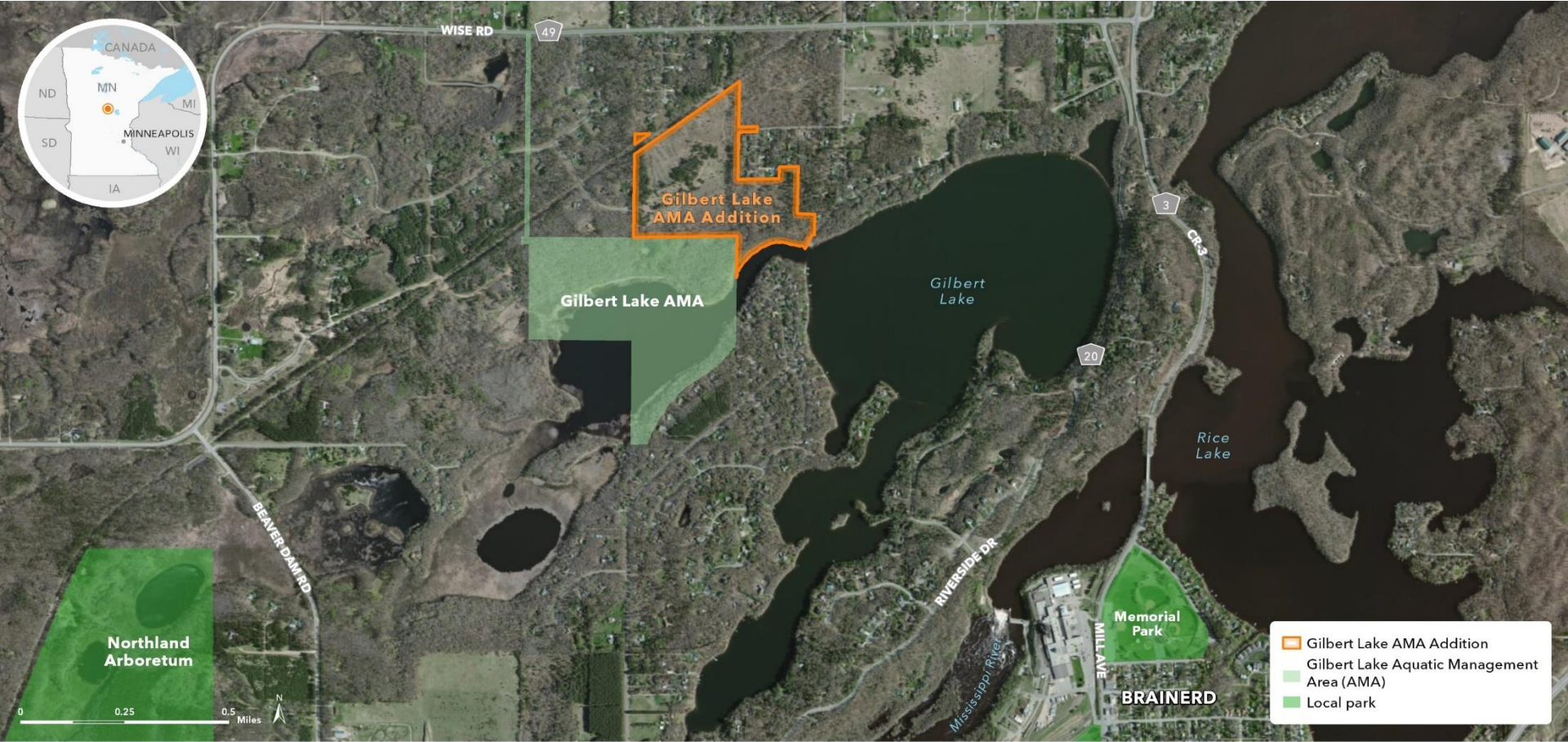
8 Recent Projects

- Additions to State Forests
 - Crow State Forest
 - Savanna State Forest (2)
- Additions to County Forests
 - Crow Wing
 - Aitkin
- Additions to DNR WMA and AMA
 - Indian Jack Lake WMA (2)
 - Gilbert Lake AMA



How TPL Works





Gilbert Lake AMA Addition

CROW WING COUNTY, MINNESOTA

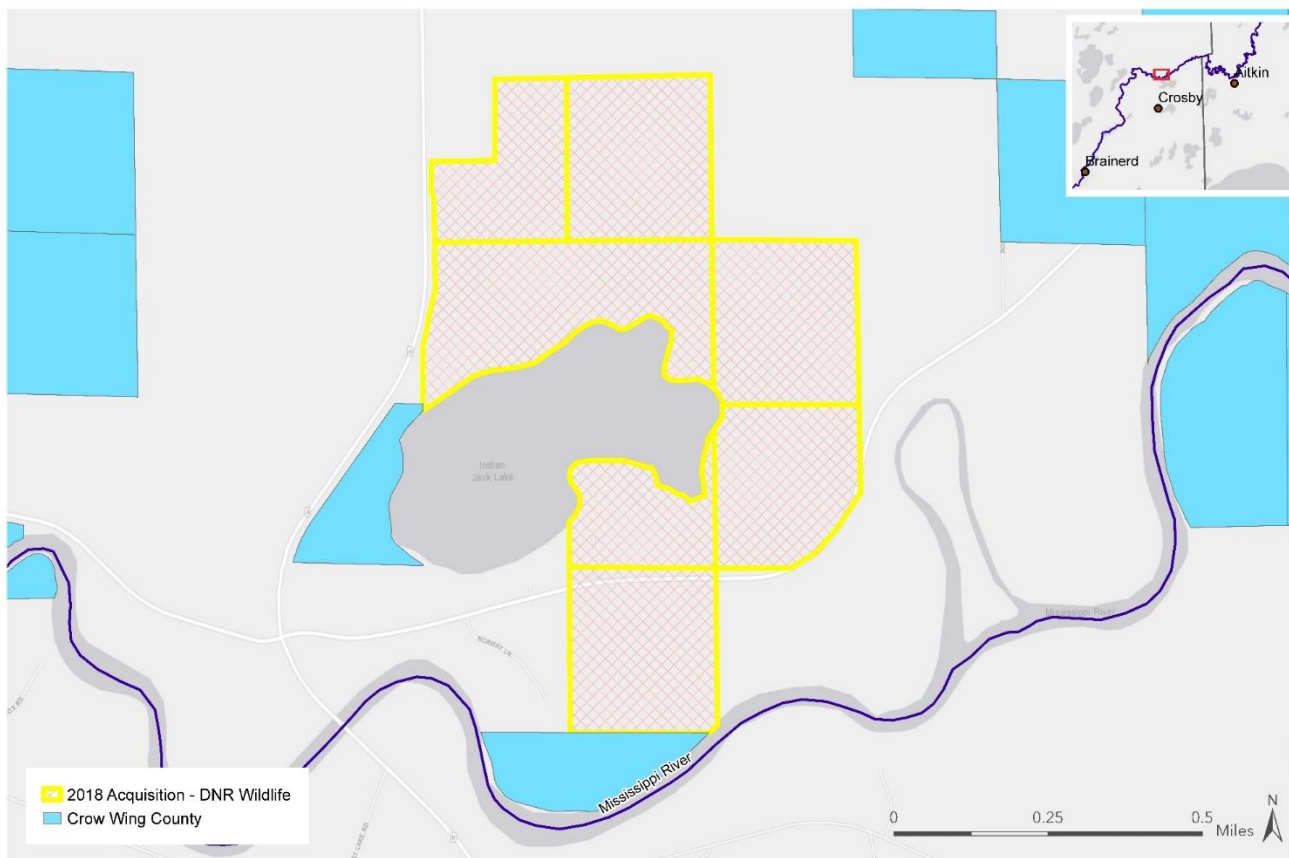
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Addition to Gilbert Lake Acquatic Management Area

- 65 acre addition with high biodiversity significance and over 1,000 feet of shoreline
- Protects critical spawning habitat
- Improves public access to existing AMA, Gilbert Lake, and the Paul Bunyan Trail
- MN DNR Fisheries permanent steward





Indian Jack Lake - 2018

Crow Wing County, Minnesota



October 23, 2019
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Indian Jack Lake Wildlife Management Area



- 270 acres with 2.5+ miles of lake and Mississippi River shoreline
- Makes accessible existing public land with river frontage
- MN DNR Wildlife permanent steward



Indian Jack Lake WMA Addition

CROW WING COUNTY, MINNESOTA

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Indian Jack Lake Addition



- Small but strategic addition to existing WMA
- 35 acres with over 1400 feet of Mississippi River shoreline
- Mixed pine and hardwood forest providing excellent wildlife and aquatic habitat, water quality benefits and public recreational opportunities including accessible features like parking area.

Creating Contiguous Habitat Protection Complexes

Why:

Fish, game and non-game wildlife have basic habitat needs that are provided through large, permanently protected habitat complexes:

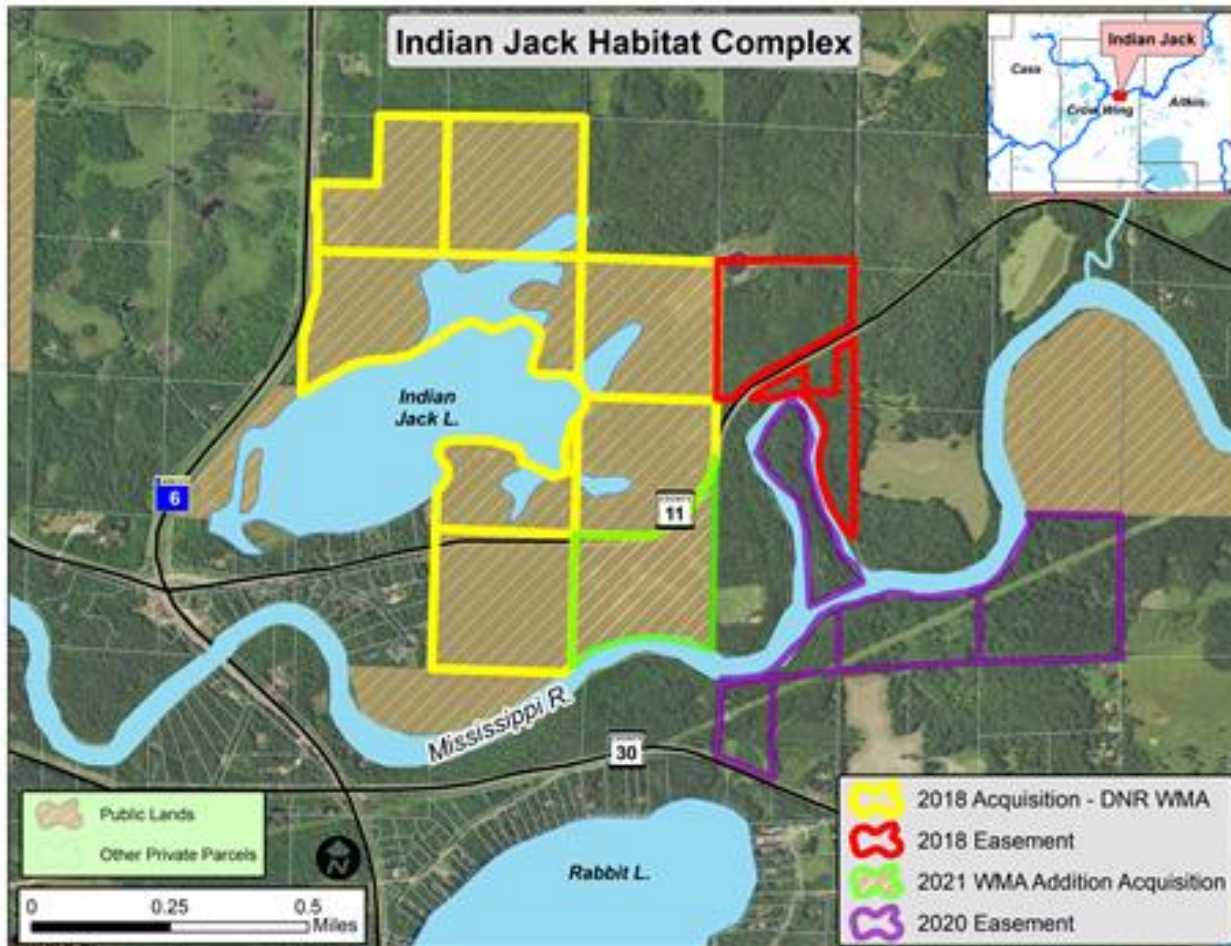
- 1) cover against predators;
- 2) water;
- 3) places to raise their young; and
- 4) space to move around during varied life stages
- 5) natural shorelines protect water quality; clean water is a critical aquatic habitat for game fish.

Conservation easements and fee-title acquisitions adjacent to public land work together to create large, contiguous and permanently protected habitat complexes.

Habitat Complex Example

Indian Jack Habitat Complex Crow Wing County

594 acres, 2.5 miles of lakeshore, and 3 miles of river



2 acquisitions

WMA -264 acres

Addition 35 acres

2 conservation easements

104 acres

combined with

**190 acres of existing
public land**

Habitat Complex Example

Crow Wing Mississippi River Complex

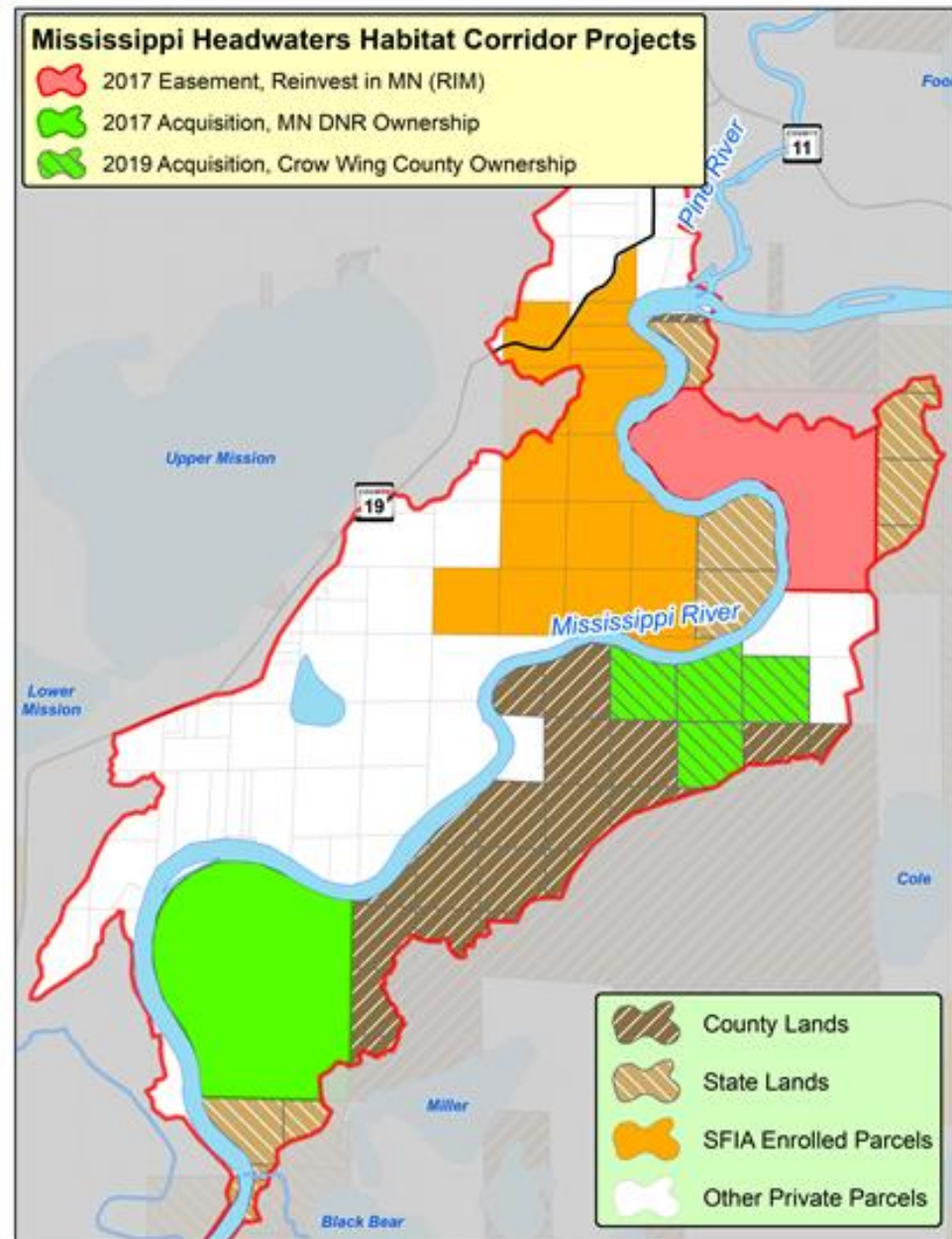
**1,672+ acres of contiguous
Protected upland and
9+ miles of shoreland**

2 acquisitions

Addition to Crow Wing State Forest
Addition to County Forest

2 conservation easements

**SFIA and state land across river
provide additional protection.**



Habitat Complex Example

Savanna State Forest Complex Complex Aitkin County

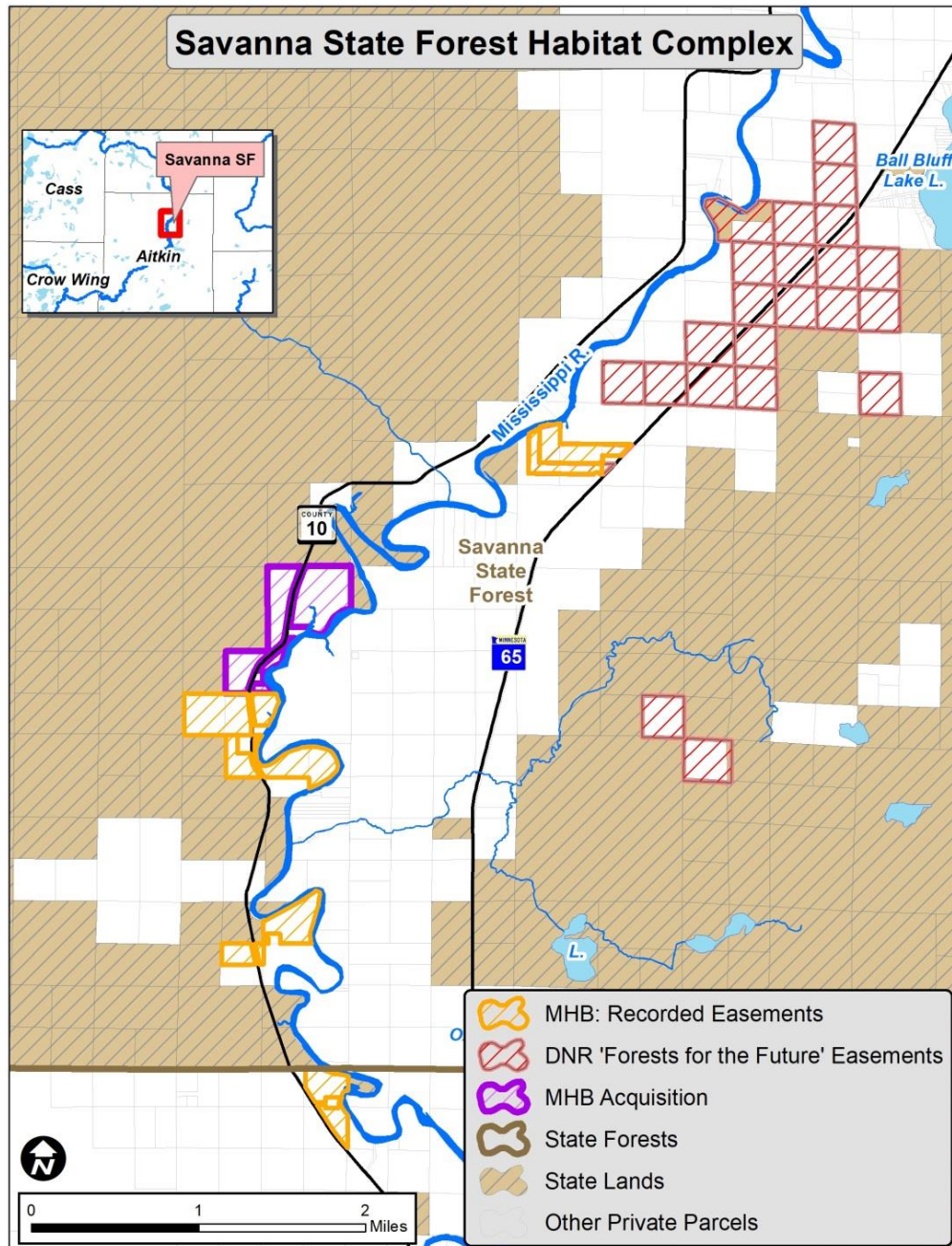
Addition to Savanna State Forest

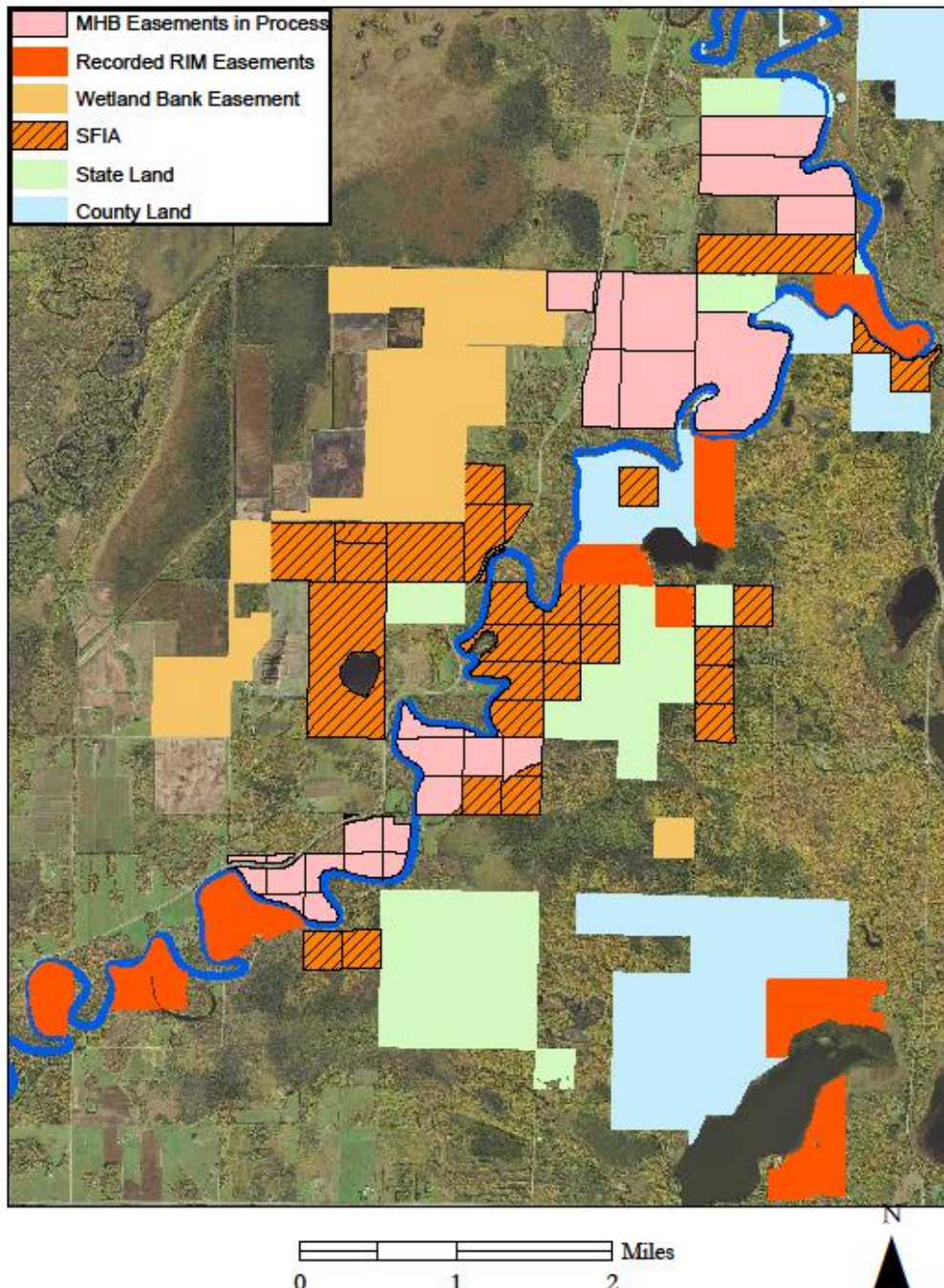
172 acres, 1.5 miles shoreland

16 conservation easements completed
18 miles of protected river shoreland

8 easements in process

Landowners talk!





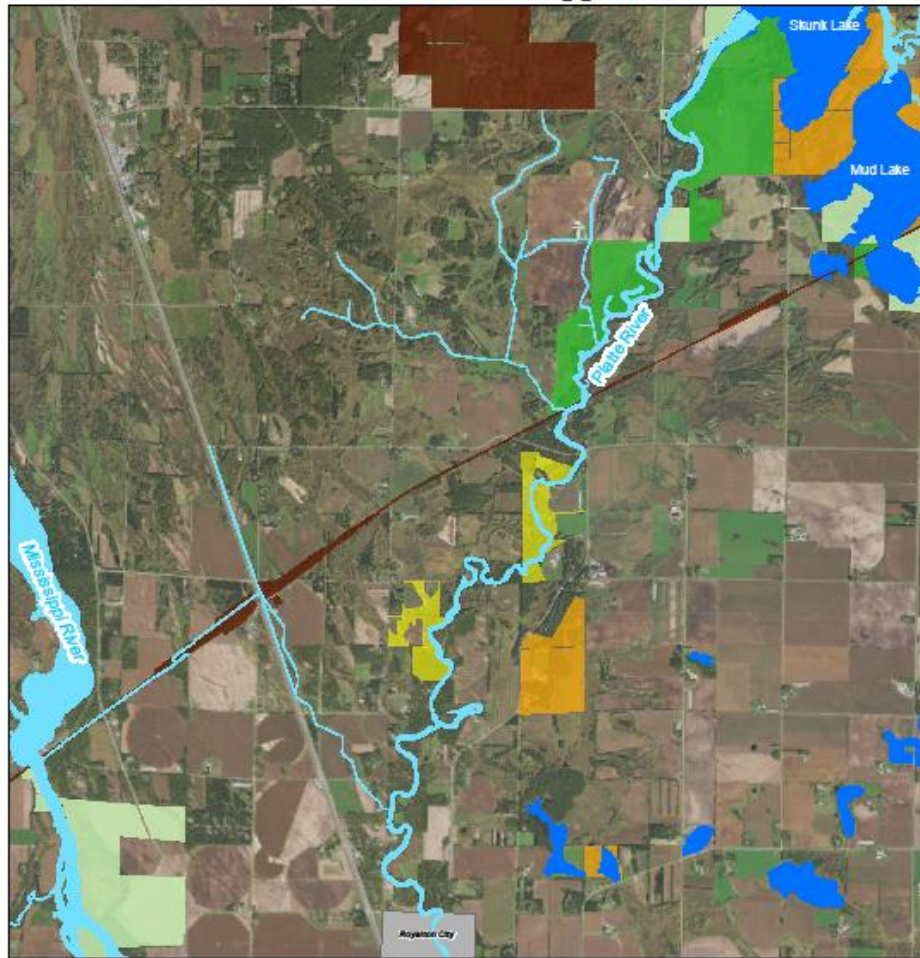
Habitat Complex Example

Libby Complex, Aitkin County

3 miles south of Savanna Complex

- 5 completed easements
- 6 easements in process
- 20 miles of river; 17 miles have protection (easement, public land, or SFIA) on at least one side of the river.

Mississippi Headwaters Habitat Corridor - Morrison County
Platte River-Mississippi River



Legend

- MHB Easements
- Federal - Crane Meadows NWR
- State DNR
- County
- SFIA Enrolled Parcels

Maps are for graphical purposes only. They do not represent a legal survey.

Habitat Complex Example

Platte River Complex/ Morrison A Major Mississippi Tributary

2 easements completed on Platte River

1.5 miles of river shoreland

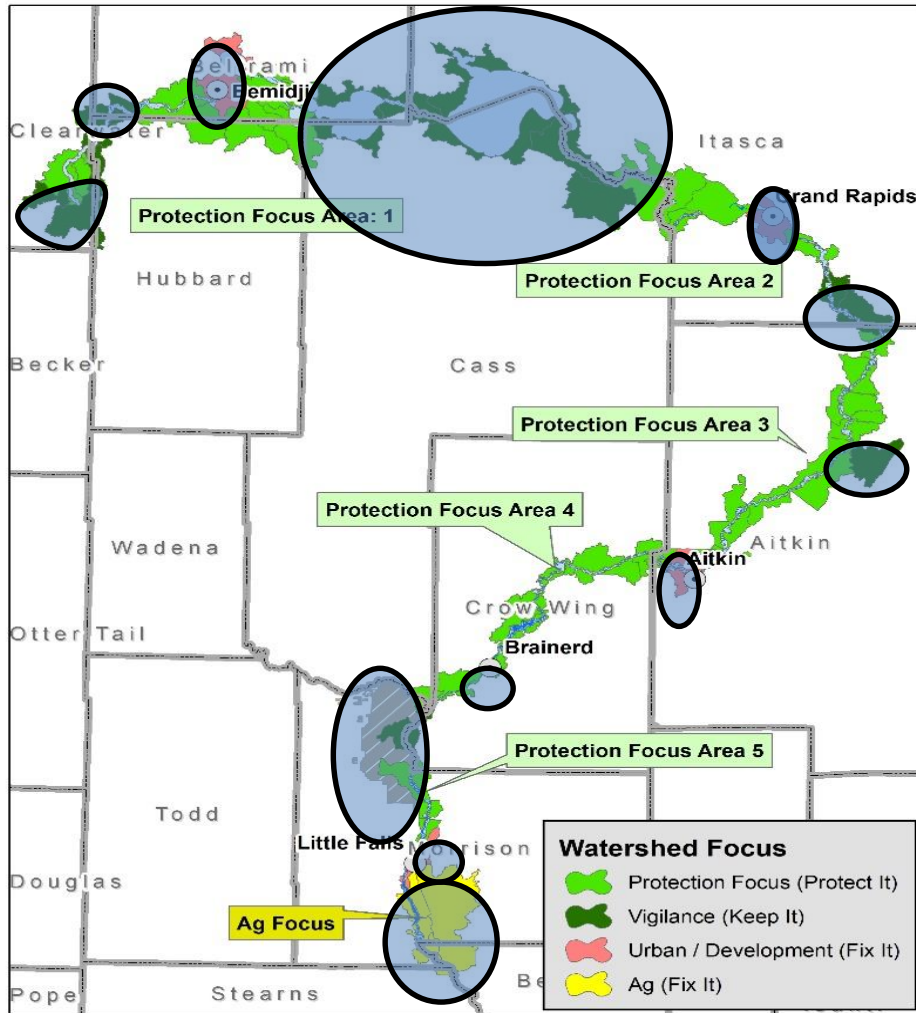
3 easements in process on Platte 1.6 miles of river shoreland

Other tributary easements in process on Swan River and Little Elk River.

MHB Protection Strategy

Develop a long range protection strategy so that leadership can have a measurable, outcome based strategy when implementing land protection programs. (easements, fee-title acquisitions, and SFIA forest incentive program).

How Do You Manage 400 Miles?



Protection priority Focused: 759,400 acres

Non Priority Areas:

- Model does not apply to urban and agricultural areas (Fix it)
- Vigilance Areas- already protected. (Chippewa National Forest)
- Sentinel Landscape- Areas where successful implementation is already occurring.
- Protection Focus- 78,400 acres.
- Parcels in priority areas- over 20 acres/non-wetland, ranked high- 811 parcels/26,570 acres.

A scenic view of a lake with a forested shoreline and a blue sky with clouds. The word "Questions?" is overlaid in the center.

Questions?