



Mississippi Headwaters Habitat Corridor Project

Protecting Critical Fish and Wildlife Habitat in the Mississippi Headwaters

This Program offers private landowners along or near the first 400 miles of the Mississippi River, or on a major tributary or headwaters lake, an opportunity to protect critical fish and wildlife habitat by permanently protecting the natural resource value of their land.



Program Goal

Funded by the Outdoor Heritage Fund created from the 2008 Clean Water Land & Legacy Constitutional Amendment, the goal of the program is to create and expand contiguous complexes of permanently protected shoreland and upland for the benefit of fish and wildlife habitat, migratory waterfowl, reduction of forest fragmentation, enhanced recreational opportunities and protection of water quality.

Land protection is achieved via fee-title acquisition of land or enrolling land in The Reinvest in Minnesota (RIM) conservation easement program.

Participation is voluntary by landowners and land must meet specific program criteria.

Why Create Habitat Complexes?

- To meet the basic needs of game and non-game wildlife such as cover from predators, water, places to raise young, and adequate area to move around during different life stages.
- Migratory waterfowl need food and cover along the Mississippi Flyway.
- Land use changes result in fragmentation of critical habitats such as forests, shorelands, grasslands, and wetlands. Permanently protecting habitat complexes prevents habitat fragmentation.

Partners

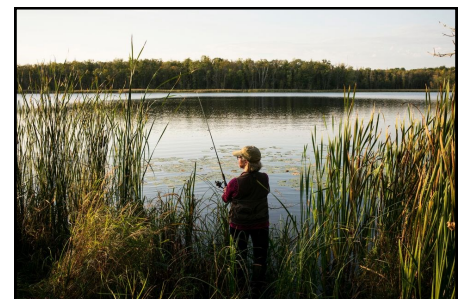
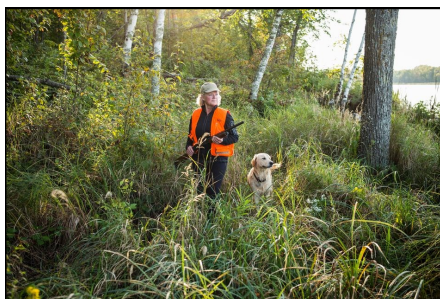
- **Mississippi Headwaters Board**
- **The Trust for Public Land**
- **MN Board of Water and Soil Resources and 7 Headwaters County SWCDs**
- **With stakeholder support from:**
The MN DNR
The Nature Conservancy



Program Accomplishments:

Since this program began in 2016, over 3,441 acres and 31 miles of shoreland have been protected.

Projects on 2,000 additional acres and 15 miles of shoreland will be completed soon.





More About Land Protection Options

Interested landowners determine which land protection option best fits their long-term land use vision for their property.

Fee-Title Acquisition

The Trust for Public Land purchases the land at a fair market value and conveys the fee-title to either The Minnesota DNR or the County for permanent ownership and the future protection and management of the property's fish, wildlife, and forestry features.

For more information on selling your property for conservation, contact:

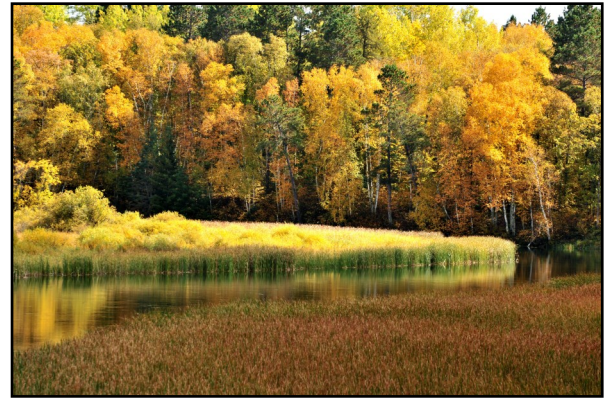
Will Cooksey, Senior Project Manager
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RIM Conservation Easement

A conservation easement is a permanent and legally binding agreement between the landowners and The MN Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR). The easement limits the use and future development of the land in order to preserve the land's unique natural resource values. In return for protecting their land, the landowner receives a **one-time payment of 60% of the land value** based on their county's current assessed land value.

The landowner still retains ownership of the land and can sell it or pass it to heirs, but the easement stays with the land title. The land is not open to the public.

For more information on a conservation easement, please contact one of the following participating SWCDs: Beltrami, Itasca, Hubbard, Cass, Crow Wing, Aitkin, and Morrison county SWCDs.



More About The Mississippi Headwaters

The Headwaters of the Mississippi River are the first 400 miles of the river from its beginning in Itasca State Park to the southern border of Morrison County. It is a national treasure for its clean water and recreational opportunities.

The Headwaters:

- Contain more than 350 species of animals, mammals, and birds.
- Is a major flyway for migrating neo-tropical birds and waterfowl.
- Flows through 8 Minnesota counties which contain 16% of the land in Minnesota.
- Provides drinking water for the cities of St. Cloud, Minneapolis, St. Paul and beyond.

