

Land and Water Legacy Program

Washington County supports the Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council (LSOHC) recommendation for the 2022 Legislature to fund the “Washington County Habitat and Restoration Partnership” proposal at \$4.2 million to protect more than 340 acres of land through conservation easements and enhance 150 acres.

Issue At-A Glance

- Support from the LSOHC would continue the work that Washington County is doing to protect natural habitat and sources of clean groundwater, especially considering a potential 25% growth in population by 2040.



Protection

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**Healthy water, soil, air,
wildlife and people**

Background Materials

LSOHC: lsohc.mn.gov

Washington County LWLP Program:

co.washington.mn.us/405/Land-and-Water-Legacy-Program

Minnesota Land Trust: mnland.org

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Support

Resident support was demonstrated during 2040 Comprehensive Planning and by a 2006 voter referendum authorizing \$20 million in bonding.

Cities are increasingly partnering with the county to support their land, water, and open space protection priorities.

This project has national, state, regional and local benefits due to the prominence of the St. Croix and Mississippi rivers.

Previous Consideration

This is a first request to expedite investment in the county Land and Water Legacy Program’s highest priority areas.

No Action

Increased demand has strained existing funding and staff capacity, resulting in the need to pursue direct funding through the Outdoor Heritage Fund dedicated specifically to Washington County. Without action, project opportunities will be missed or delayed.

Financial Implications

County matching funds of \$720,000 along with landowner donations will provide nearly 40% leverage to the requested state funds.