

Subject Outdoor Heritage Fund

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Overview

This bill contains appropriations totaling \$137,500,000 from the outdoor heritage fund (OHF) as recommended by the Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council (LSOHC). The LSOHC is a 12-member council made up of four legislators and eight citizens tasked with making annual recommendations to the legislature on how to spend money in the OHF. The OHF is one of four funds established by the “Legacy” amendment which raised the state’s sales tax $\frac{3}{8}$ of one percent and dedicated the receipts. The OHF receives 33 percent of those receipts and the money may be spent only “to restore, protect, and enhance wetlands, prairies, forests, and habitat for fish, game, and wildlife.”

Summary

Section	Description
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1	Outdoor heritage fund appropriation.
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Technical.

2	Outdoor heritage fund.
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Subd. 1. Total appropriation. Provides a total appropriation of \$137,500,000 in fiscal year 2021 from the outdoor heritage fund.

Subd. 2. Prairies. Specifies appropriations totaling \$41,803,000 for various prairie projects.

Subd. 3. Forests. Specifies appropriations totaling \$15,946,000 for various forest projects.

Subd. 4. Wetlands. Specifies appropriations totaling \$14,729,000 for various wetland projects.

Subd. 5. Habitats. Specifies appropriations totaling \$64,662,000 for various other habitat projects and the conservation partners legacy grant program.

Section Description

Subd. 6. Administration. Specifies appropriations totaling \$360,000 for administration, including contract management services from the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and restoration evaluations.

Subd. 7. Availability of appropriation. States that money appropriated may not be spent on activities unless they are directly related to and necessary for a specific appropriation and are specified in the accomplishment plan and may not be spent on indirect costs or other institutional overhead charges that are not directly related to a specific appropriation. Provides for the availability of funding depending on the use of the funds and whether or not federal funds are also used.

Subd. 8. Payment conditions and capital equipment expenditures. Requires all agreements to be administered on a reimbursement basis unless otherwise provided. Allows reasonable amounts to be advanced in some circumstances if approved as part of an accomplishment plan. Requires capital expenditures that exceed \$10,000 to be itemized and approved as part of an accomplishment plan.

Subd. 9. Mapping. Requires recipients of an appropriation to submit geographic information on lands acquired in fee with the appropriation that are open to the public for hunting and fishing to the DNR for mapping.

Subd. 10. Carryforwards. Extends the availability of two previous appropriations.

3 Open meetings.

Requires meetings of the LSOHC held in the Capitol complex to be webcast and archived for later playback. Requires other meetings to be webcast and archived to the extent practical.

4 Legislative oversight.

Updates an obsolete provision that required legislative committees to convene a joint hearing to review the activities and effectiveness of the LSOHC by updating the committees required to hold the hearing and requiring the hearing to be convened again by June 30, 2021.

5 Use of motorized vehicles by hunters with physical disability.

Expands a provision allowing a person with a disability to use a motorized vehicle to hunt in a wildlife management area (WMA) to those with a disability who have a valid disability parking certificate or license plate. Under current law, only those who have a permanent disability who have a special permit from the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) may do so.

Section	Description
6	Forests. Modifies a 2017 appropriation from the OHF for conservation easement acquisition in Washington County to increase the amount available for deposit in an easement monitoring and enforcement fund and extend the availability of the appropriation until June 30, 2022.
7	Habitats. Modifies a 2019 appropriation from the OHF for conservation stream easements in the St. Croix River watershed to allow a portion of the money to be deposited in a conservation easement stewardship account.



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