SENATE
STATE OF MINNESOTA
NINETY-FOURTH SESSION

S.F. No. 4304

(SENATE AUTHORS: HAWJ and Lang)

DATE	D-PG	OFFICIAL STATUS
03/09/2026	6577	Introduction and first reading Referred to Environment, Climate, and Legacy
03/11/2026	6602	Author added Lang
03/23/2026	6827a	Comm report: To pass as amended and re-refer to Finance
05/07/2026	9982a	Comm report: To pass as amended
	10033	Second reading See SF2077

A bill for an act

relating to natural resources; appropriating money from outdoor heritage fund; extending and modifying prior appropriations; amending Laws 2024, chapter 106, article 1, section 2, subdivision 5.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MINNESOTA:

Section 1. **APPROPRIATIONS.**

The sums shown in the columns marked "Appropriations" are appropriated to the agencies and for the purposes specified in this act. The appropriations are from the outdoor heritage fund for the fiscal year indicated for each purpose. The figures "2026" and "2027" used in this act mean that the appropriations listed under them are available for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2026, or June 30, 2027, respectively. "The first year" is fiscal year 2026. "The second year" is fiscal year 2027. "The biennium" is fiscal years 2026 and 2027. The appropriations in this act are onetime appropriations.

	APPROPRIATIONS	
	Available for the Year	
	Ending June 30	
	2026	**2027**

Sec. 2. **OUTDOOR HERITAGE FUND**

Subdivision 1. **Total Appropriation**	**$**	**-0-**	**$ 191,081,000**

This appropriation is from the outdoor heritage fund. The amounts that may be spent for each purpose are specified in the following subdivisions.

Subd. 2. **Prairies** -0- 36,387,000

(a) RIM Grasslands Reserve, Phase 7

$2,334,000 the second year is to acquire permanent conservation easements and to restore and enhance wildlife habitat. Of this amount, $191,000 is to the commissioner of natural resources for an agreement with Ducks Unlimited and $2,143,000 is to the Board of Water and Soil Resources. Of the amount to the Board of Water and Soil Resources, up to $50,000 is to establish a monitoring and enforcement fund as approved in the accomplishment plan and subject to Minnesota Statutes, section 97A.056, subdivision 17. A list of permanent conservation easements must be provided as part of the final report.

(b) Accelerating Wildlife Management Area Program, Phase 18

$4,521,000 the second year is to the commissioner of natural resources for an agreement with Pheasants Forever to acquire in fee and to restore and enhance lands for wildlife management area purposes under Minnesota Statutes, section 86A.05, subdivision 8. Subject to evaluation criteria in Minnesota Rules, part 6136.0900, priority must be given to acquiring lands that are eligible for the native prairie bank under Minnesota Statutes, section 84.96, or lands adjacent to protected native prairie.

(c) DNR Wildlife Management Area and Scientific and Natural Area Acquisition, Phase 18

$3,502,000 the second year is to the commissioner of natural resources to acquire in fee and to restore and enhance lands for wildlife management purposes under Minnesota Statutes, section 86A.05, subdivision 8, and to acquire land in fee for scientific and natural area purposes under Minnesota Statutes, section 86A.05, subdivision 5. Subject to evaluation criteria in Minnesota Rules, part 6136.0900, priority must be given to acquiring lands that are eligible for the native prairie bank under Minnesota Statutes, section 84.96, or lands adjacent to protected native prairie.

(d) Martin County DNR WMA Acquisition, Phase 10

$3,017,000 the second year is to the commissioner of natural resources for agreements to acquire land in fee and to restore and enhance strategic prairie grassland, wetland, and other wildlife habitat in Martin and Watonwan Counties for wildlife management area purposes under Minnesota Statutes, section 86A.05, subdivision 8, as follows: $2,363,000 to Fox Lake Conservation League, Inc.; $583,000 to Ducks Unlimited; and $71,000 to the Conservation Fund.

(e) Northern Tallgrass Prairie National Wildlife Refuge, Phase 16

$3,087,000 the second year is to the commissioner of natural resources for an agreement with The Nature Conservancy, in cooperation with the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, to acquire land in fee or permanent conservation easements and to

restore and enhance lands in the Northern Tallgrass Prairie Habitat Preservation Area in western Minnesota to add to the Northern Tallgrass Prairie National Wildlife Refuge. Subject to evaluation criteria in Minnesota Rules, part 6136.0900, priority must be given to acquiring lands that are eligible for the native prairie bank under Minnesota Statutes, section 84.96, or lands adjacent to protected native prairie.

(f) Minnesota Prairie Recovery Program, Phase 15

$3,492,000 the second year is to the commissioner of natural resources for an agreement with The Nature Conservancy to acquire land in fee and to restore and enhance native prairie, grasslands, wetlands, and savanna. Subject to evaluation criteria in Minnesota Rules, part 6136.0900, priority must be given to acquiring lands that are eligible for the native prairie bank under Minnesota Statutes, section 84.96, or lands adjacent to protected native prairie. Annual income statements and balance sheets for income and expenses from land acquired and held by The Nature Conservancy with this appropriation must be submitted to the Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council no later than 180 days after the The Nature Conservancy's fiscal year closes.

(g) Prairie Chicken Habitat Partnership of Southern Red River Valley, Phase 12

$3,094,000 the second year is to the commissioner of natural resources for an agreement with Pheasants Forever, in

cooperation with the Minnesota Prairie Chicken Society, to acquire land in fee and to restore and enhance lands in the southern Red River Valley for wildlife management purposes under Minnesota Statutes, section 86A.05, subdivision 8, or to be designated and managed as waterfowl production areas in Minnesota, in cooperation with the United States Fish and Wildlife Service. Subject to evaluation criteria in Minnesota Rules, part 6136.0900, priority must be given to acquiring lands that are eligible for the native prairie bank under Minnesota Statutes, section 84.96, or lands adjacent to protected native prairie.

(h) RIM Buffers for Wildlife and Water, Phase 12

$3,744,000 the second year is to the Board of Water and Soil Resources to acquire permanent conservation easements and restore habitat under Minnesota Statutes, section 103F.515, to protect, restore, and enhance habitat by expanding the riparian buffer program under the clean water fund for additional wildlife benefits from buffers on private land. Of this amount, up to $60,000 is to establish a monitoring and enforcement fund as approved in the accomplishment plan and subject to Minnesota Statutes, section 97A.056, subdivision 17. Subdivision 8, paragraph (b), does not apply to this project. A list of permanent conservation easements must be provided as part of the final report.

(i) Accelerating USFWS Habitat Conservation Easement Program, Phase 6

$4,509,000 the second year is to the commissioner of natural resources for agreements to restore and enhance wetland and prairie habitat on habitat easements of the United States Fish and Wildlife Service as follows: $3,019,000 to Ducks Unlimited and $1,490,000 to Pheasants Forever.

(j) DNR Grassland Enhancement, Phase 17

$2,139,000 the second year is to the commissioner of natural resources to accelerate restoration and enhancement of prairies, grasslands, and savannas in wildlife management areas; in scientific and natural areas; in aquatic management areas; on lands in the native prairie bank; in bluff prairies on state forest land in southeastern Minnesota; and in waterfowl production areas and refuge lands of the United States Fish and Wildlife Service.

(k) Enhanced Public Land - Grasslands, Phase 9

$2,948,000 the second year is to the commissioner of natural resources for an agreement with Pheasants Forever to enhance and restore grassland and wetland habitat on public lands in the forest prairie transition, metro urban, and prairie ecoregions of Minnesota.

Subd. 3. **Forests** -0- 36,939,000

(a) Northern Forests Legacy Project

$25,090,000 the second year is to the commissioner of natural resources to acquire priority forest lands in fee in St. Louis County as wildlife management areas, scientific and

natural areas, state forests, and county forests. Of this amount, $12,866,000 is for an agreement with St. Louis County.

(b) Sand Lake and Seven Beavers Acquisition and Enhancement

$7,347,000 the second year is to the commissioner of natural resources for an agreement with The Nature Conservancy to acquire priority forest habitat lands in fee as The Nature Conservancy lands, Rajala Woods Foundation lands, state forests, and county forests. For lands held in perpetuity by The Nature Conservancy and Rajala Woods Foundation, annual income statements and balance sheets for income and expenses from land acquired with this appropriation must be submitted to the Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council no later than 180 days after each organization's respective fiscal year closes.

(c) Hardwood Hills Habitat Conservation Program, Phase 3

$2,558,000 the second year is to the commissioner of natural resources for agreements to acquire permanent conservation easements and to restore and enhance forest habitats in the hardwood hills ecological section of west-central Minnesota as follows: $90,000 to St. John's University, $354,000 to Stearns Conservation District, and $2,114,000 to Minnesota Land Trust. Of the amount to Minnesota Land Trust, $252,000 is to establish a monitoring and enforcement fund as approved in the accomplishment plan and

subject to Minnesota Statutes, section 97A.056, subdivision 17.

(d) DNR Forest Habitat Enhancement, Phase 6

$1,944,000 the second year is to the commissioner of natural resources to restore and enhance forest wildlife habitats on public lands throughout Minnesota.

Subd. 4. **Wetlands**		-0-	33,188,000

(a) Accelerating Waterfowl Production Area Acquisition Program, Phase 18

$5,431,000 the second year is to the commissioner of natural resources for an agreement with Pheasants Forever, in cooperation with the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, to acquire land in fee and to restore and enhance wetlands and grasslands to be designated and managed as waterfowl production areas in Minnesota.

(b) RIM Wetlands - Restoring Most Productive Habitat in Minnesota, Phase 15

$3,502,000 the second year is to the Board of Water and Soil Resources to acquire permanent conservation easements and to restore wetlands and native grassland habitat under Minnesota Statutes, section 103F.515. Of this amount, up to $60,000 is to establish a monitoring and enforcement fund as approved in the accomplishment plan and subject to Minnesota Statutes, section 97A.056, subdivision 17. Subdivision 8, paragraph (b), does not apply to this project. A list of permanent conservation easements must be provided as part of the final report.

(c) Shallow Lake and Wetland Protection and Restoration Program, Phase 15

$6,087,000 the second year is to the commissioner of natural resources for an agreement with Ducks Unlimited to acquire land in fee for wildlife management purposes under Minnesota Statutes, section 86A.05, subdivision 8, or to be designated and managed as waterfowl production areas or national wildlife refuges in Minnesota, in cooperation with the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, and to restore and enhance prairie lands, wetlands, and land-buffering shallow lakes.

(d) Wetland Habitat Protection and Restoration Program, Phase 11

$3,210,000 the second year is to the commissioner of natural resources for an agreement with Minnesota Land Trust to acquire permanent conservation easements and to restore and enhance prairie, wetland, and other habitat on permanently protected conservation easements in high-priority wetland habitat complexes in the prairie, forest/prairie transition, and forest ecoregions. Of this amount, up to $140,000 is to establish a monitoring and enforcement fund as approved in the accomplishment plan and subject to Minnesota Statutes, section 97A.056, subdivision 17.

(e) Living Shallow Lakes and Wetlands Enhancement and Restoration Initiative, Phase 12

$6,661,000 the second year is to the commissioner of natural resources for an agreement with Ducks Unlimited to restore and enhance shallow lakes and wetlands on public lands and wetlands under permanent conservation easement for wildlife management.

(f) Talcot Lake

$1,000,000 the second year is to the commissioner of natural resources for the survey, design, engineering, and permitting of the Talcot Lake restoration and enhancement project in Cottonwood County.

(g) Roseau Lake Rehabilitation, Phase 3

$3,553,000 the second year is to the commissioner of natural resources for an agreement with the Roseau River Watershed District to restore and enhance the Roseau Lake and Roseau River habitat complex in Roseau County. The approved accomplishment plan must include an operational and management plan for the Roseau Lake Rehabilitation Project. The Roseau River Watershed District must submit progress reports and a final report that include monitoring data related to water quantity and information about how flooding to adjacent and downstream agricultural lands has been addressed as part of the progress reports and final report submitted to the Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council. No money from this appropriation may be expended:

(1) prior to January 1, 2027; or

(2) during any period in which a court order enjoining the project from moving forward is in effect.

(h) Shallow Lakes and Wetlands Enhancement, Phase 18

$3,744,000 the second year is to the commissioner of natural resources to enhance and restore shallow lakes and wetland habitat statewide.

Subd. 5. **Habitats**		-0-	82,408,000

(a) Riparian Habitat Protection in Kettle and Snake River Watersheds, Phase 3

$1,137,000 the second year is to the Board of Water and Soil Resources, in cooperation with the Pine County Soil and Water Conservation District, to acquire permanent conservation easements and restore high-quality forests, wetlands, and shoreline in the Kettle and Snake River watersheds. Of this amount, up to $70,000 is to establish a monitoring and enforcement fund as approved in the accomplishment plan and subject to Minnesota Statutes, section 97A.056, subdivision 17. Subdivision 8, paragraph (b), does not apply to this project. A list of permanent conservation easements must be provided as part of the final report.

(b) Cannon River Watershed Habitat Restoration and Protection Program, Phase 15

$2,886,000 the second year is to the commissioner of natural resources for agreements to acquire lands in fee and to restore and enhance wildlife habitat in the

Cannon River Watershed as follows: $92,000 to Clean River Partners and $2,794,000 to Trust for Public Land.

(c) DNR Aquatic Management Area Acquisition and Trout Stream Easement Acquisition

$2,182,000 the second year is to the commissioner of natural resources to acquire land in fee as aquatic management areas and to acquire permanent conservation easements to protect trout-stream aquatic habitat. Of this amount, up to $88,000 is to establish a monitoring and enforcement fund as approved in the accomplishment plan and subject to Minnesota Statutes, section 97A.056, subdivision 17.

(d) Washington County Habitat Protection and Enhancement Partnership, Phase 2

$2,812,000 the second year is to the commissioner of natural resources for agreements to acquire permanent conservation easements and to restore and enhance wildlife habitats in Washington County as follows: $760,000 to Washington County and $2,052,000 to Minnesota Land Trust. Of the amount to Minnesota Land Trust, $196,000 is to establish a monitoring and enforcement fund as approved in the accomplishment plan and subject to Minnesota Statutes, section 97A.056, subdivision 17.

(e) Fisheries Habitat Protection on Strategic North Central Minnesota Lakes, Phase 12

$2,317,000 the second year is to the commissioner of natural resources for an

agreement with Northern Waters Land Trust to acquire land in fee and to restore and enhance wildlife habitat to sustain healthy fish habitat on coldwater lakes in Aitkin, Cass, Crow Wing, and Hubbard Counties.

(f) Greenbelt, Phase 1

$1,467,000 the second year is to the commissioner of natural resources for an agreement with Comfort Lake-Forest Lake Watershed District to acquire land in fee and permanent conservation easements and to restore and enhance wildlife habitat within the Comfort Lake-Forest Lake Watershed District boundary.

(g) Integrating Habitat and Clean Water, Phase 4

$1,827,000 the second year is to the Board of Water and Soil Resources to acquire permanent conservation easements and to restore and enhance wildlife habitat identified under the One Watershed, One Plan program for stacked benefit to wildlife and clean water. Of this amount, up to $40,000 is to establish a monitoring and enforcement fund as approved in the accomplishment plan and subject to Minnesota Statutes, section 97A.056, subdivision 17. A list of permanent conservation easements must be provided as part of the final report.

(h) Metro Big Rivers, Phase 16

$6,776,000 the second year is to the commissioner of natural resources for agreements to acquire land in fee and to restore and enhance natural habitat systems

associated with the Mississippi, Minnesota, and St. Croix Rivers and their tributaries in the metropolitan area as follows: $1,491,000 to Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge Trust, Inc.; $892,000 to Friends of the Mississippi River; $1,055,000 to Great River Greening; and $3,338,000 to Trust for Public Land.

(i) Mississippi Headwaters Habitat Corridor Project, Phase 10

$2,770,000 the second year is to acquire lands in fee and permanent conservation easements and to restore wildlife habitat in the Mississippi headwaters. Of this amount, (1) $1,387,000 is to the commissioner of natural resources for agreements as follows: $60,000 to the Mississippi Headwaters Board and $1,327,000 to Trust for Public Land; and (2) $1,383,000 is to the Board of Water and Soil Resources, of which up to $70,000 is to establish a monitoring and enforcement fund as approved in the accomplishment plan and subject to Minnesota Statutes, section 97A.056, subdivision 17. A list of permanent conservation easements must be provided as part of the final report.

(j) Protecting Coldwater Fisheries on Minnesota's North Shore, Phase 4

$1,695,000 the second year is to the commissioner of natural resources for an agreement with Minnesota Land Trust to acquire permanent conservation easements and to restore and enhance wildlife habitat in priority coldwater tributaries to Lake Superior. Of this amount, up to $196,000 is to establish

a monitoring and enforcement fund as approved in the accomplishment plan and subject to Minnesota Statutes, section 97A.056, subdivision 17.

(k) Protecting Minnesota's Lakes of Outstanding Biological Significance, Phase 5

$2,983,000 the second year is to the commissioner of natural resources for agreements to acquire land in fee and permanent conservation easements and to restore and enhance lakes of outstanding biological significance in northeast and north-central Minnesota. Of this amount, $1,612,000 is to the Northern Waters Land Trust and $1,371,000 is to Minnesota Land Trust. Of the amount to Minnesota Land Trust, up to $140,000 is to establish a monitoring and enforcement fund as approved in the accomplishment plan and subject to Minnesota Statutes, section 97A.056, subdivision 17.

(l) Red River Basin Riparian Habitat Program, Phase 2

$3,920,000 the second year is to acquire permanent conservation easements to protect, restore, and enhance stream and riparian habitat throughout the Red River watershed. Of this amount, $116,000 is to the commissioner of natural resources for agreements with the Red River Watershed Management Board and $3,804,000 is to the Board of Water and Soil Resources. Of the amount to the Board of Water and Soil Resources, up to $250,000 is to establish a monitoring and enforcement fund as approved

in the accomplishment plan and subject to Minnesota Statutes, section 97A.056, subdivision 17. A list of permanent conservation easements must be provided as part of the final report.

(m) Shell Rock River Watershed Habitat Restoration Program, Phase 15

$2,066,000 the second year is to the commissioner of natural resources for an agreement with the Shell Rock River Watershed District to acquire land in fee and to restore and enhance habitat in the Shell Rock River watershed.

(n) Southeast Minnesota Protection and Restoration, Phase 14

$7,956,000 the second year is to the commissioner of natural resources for agreements to acquire land in fee and permanent conservation easements and to restore and enhance wildlife habitat in southeast Minnesota. Of this amount, $1,035,000 is to The Nature Conservancy, $5,825,000 is to Trust for Public Land, and $1,096,000 is to Minnesota Land Trust. Of the amount to Minnesota Land Trust, up to $140,000 is to establish a monitoring and enforcement fund as approved in the accomplishment plan and subject to Minnesota Statutes, section 97A.056, subdivision 17.

(o) St. Croix Watershed Habitat Protection and Restoration, Phase 7

$3,859,000 the second year is to the commissioner of natural resources for agreements to acquire land in fee and acquire

permanent conservation easements and to restore and enhance natural habitat systems in the St. Croix River watershed as follows: $2,157,000 to Trust for Public Land, $130,000 to Wild Rivers Conservancy, and $1,572,000 to Minnesota Land Trust. Of the amount to Minnesota Land Trust, up to $140,000 is to establish a monitoring and enforcement fund as approved in the accomplishment plan and subject to Minnesota Statutes, section 97A.056, subdivision 17.

(p) Upper Mississippi Flyway Habitat Conservation Program

$2,156,000 the second year is to the commissioner of natural resources for an agreement with Minnesota Land Trust to acquire permanent conservation easements and to restore and enhance wetlands, stream corridors, and associated uplands in central Minnesota. Of this amount, up to $196,000 is to establish a monitoring and enforcement fund as approved in the accomplishment plan and subject to Minnesota Statutes, section 97A.056, subdivision 17.

(q) A River of Birds in the Sky: Conserving Minnesota's Flyway

$1,227,000 the second year is to the commissioner of natural resources for an agreement with National Audubon Society to restore and enhance priority wildlife habitat along the St. Croix, Minnesota, and Mississippi river valleys.

(r) Bone Lake South, Phase 2

$1,432,000 the second year is to the commissioner of natural resources for an agreement with Comfort Lake-Forest Lake Watershed District to restore and enhance wildlife habitat in the Bone Lake south habitat complex in Washington County.

(s) DNR Aquatic Habitat Restoration and Enhancement, Phase 9

$6,517,000 the second year is to the commissioner of natural resources to restore and enhance aquatic habitat in degraded streams and aquatic management areas and to facilitate fish passage throughout Minnesota.

(t) Little Cannon River Stream Habitat Restoration

$500,000 the second year is to the commissioner of natural resources for agreements for survey, design, engineering, and permitting of the Little Cannon River restoration and enhancement project in Goodhue County as follows: $40,000 to Clean Rivers Partners, $10,000 to Great River Greening, and $450,000 to Trout Unlimited.

(u) Mission Creek Watershed Connectivity

$1,296,000 the second year is to the commissioner of natural resources to restore and enhance coldwater stream habitat in the Mission Creek watershed in St. Louis County.

(v) Mud River Enhancement Project

$2,957,000 the second year is to the commissioner of natural resources for an agreement with Red Lake Watershed District

to restore and enhance the Mud River habitat complex in Marshall County.

(w) Oak Savanna Restoration for Living Landscapes

$1,702,000 the second year is to the Board of Water and Soil Resources, in partnership with the Xerces Society, to restore and enhance oak savanna and associated ecosystems on local public and Tribal lands.

(x) Swift Coulee Channel Restoration and Enhancement, Phase 2

$2,671,000 the second year is to the commissioner of natural resources for an agreement with the Middle-Snake-Tamarac Rivers Watershed District to restore and enhance priority habitat associated with the Swift Coulee channel restoration in Marshall County.

(y) Woods Creek Restoration

$750,000 the second year is to the commissioner of natural resources for an agreement with Cook County to restore and enhance coldwater stream habitat in Woods Creek in Cook County.

(z) Minnesota Statewide Trout Habitat Enhancement and Protection

$750,000 the second year is to the commissioner of natural resources for an agreement with Trout Unlimited for survey, design, engineering, and permitting of trout stream restoration and enhancement projects throughout Minnesota.

(aa) Conservation Partners Legacy Grant Program: Statewide and Metro Habitat, Phase 18

$13,797,000 the second year is to the commissioner of natural resources for a program to provide competitive matching grants of up to $500,000 to local, regional, state, and national organizations for enhancing, restoring, or protecting forests, wetlands, prairies, or habitat for fish, game, or wildlife in Minnesota. Unless there are not enough eligible grant applications received, of this amount, at least $3,500,000 is for grants in the seven-county metropolitan area and cities with a population of 50,000 or more and at least $3,000,000 is for grants to applicants that have not previously applied for money from the outdoor heritage fund. Grants must not be made for activities required to fulfill the duties of owners of lands subject to conservation easements. Grants must not be made from the appropriation in this paragraph for projects that have a total project cost exceeding $1,000,000. Of the total appropriation, $600,000 may be spent for personnel costs, outreach, and support to first-time applicants and other direct and necessary administrative costs. Grantees may acquire land or interests in land. Easements must be permanent. Grants may not be used to establish easement stewardship accounts. The program must require a match of at least ten percent from nonstate sources for all grants. The match may be cash or in-kind. For grant applications of $25,000 or less, the commissioner must provide a separate, simplified application

process. Subject to Minnesota Statutes, the commissioner of natural resources must, when evaluating projects of equal value, give priority to organizations that have a history of receiving, or a charter to receive, private contributions for local conservation or habitat projects. All restoration or enhancement projects must be on land permanently protected by a permanent covenant ensuring perpetual maintenance and protection of restored and enhanced habitat, by a conservation easement, or by public ownership or in public waters as defined in Minnesota Statutes, section 103G.005, subdivision 15. Priority must be given to restoration and enhancement projects on public lands. Minnesota Statutes, section 97A.056, subdivision 13, applies to grants awarded under this paragraph. This appropriation is available until June 30, 2029. No less than five percent of the amount of each grant must be held back from reimbursement until the grant recipient completes a grant accomplishment report by the deadline and in the form prescribed by and satisfactory to the Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council. The commissioner must provide notice of the grant program in the summary of game and fish law prepared under Minnesota Statutes, section 97A.051, subdivision 2.

Subd. 6. **Administration** -0- 2,159,000

(a) Contract Management

$450,000 the second year is to the commissioner of natural resources for contract management duties assigned in this section.

The commissioner must provide an accomplishment plan in the form specified by the Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council on expending this appropriation. The accomplishment plan must include a copy of the grant contract template and reimbursement manual. No money may be expended before the Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council approves the accomplishment plan. Money appropriated in this paragraph is available until June 30, 2028.

(b) Core Functions in Partner-led OHF Land Acquisitions

$1,377,000 the second year is to the commissioner of natural resources to administer the initial development, restoration, and enhancement of land acquired in fee with money appropriated from the outdoor heritage fund. This appropriation may be used for land acquisition costs incurred by the Department of Natural Resources as part of conveyance of parcels to the department and initial development activities on fee title acquisitions. Money appropriated in this paragraph is available until June 30, 2034.

(c) Technical Evaluation Panel

$192,000 the second year is to the commissioner of natural resources for a technical evaluation panel to conduct up to 20 restoration and enhancement evaluations under Minnesota Statutes, section 97A.056, subdivision 10. Money appropriated in this paragraph is available until June 30, 2028.

(d) Legislative Coordinating Commission

$140,000 the second year is to the Legislative Coordinating Commission for administrative expenses of the Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council and for compensating and reimbursing expenses of council members. This appropriation is in addition to the fiscal year 2027 appropriation in Laws 2025, chapter 36, article 1, section 2, subdivision 6, paragraph (b), and is available until June 30, 2027. Minnesota Statutes, section 16A.281, applies to this appropriation.

Subd. 7. **Availability of Appropriation**

(a) Money appropriated in this section 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 approved by the Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council. Money appropriated in this section must not be spent on indirect costs or other institutional overhead charges that are not directly related to and necessary for a specific appropriation. Money appropriated for fee title acquisition of land may be used to restore, enhance, and provide for public use of the land acquired with the appropriation. Public-use facilities must have a minimal impact on habitat in acquired lands.

(b) Money appropriated in this section is available as follows:

(1) money appropriated to acquire real property is available until June 30, 2030;

(2) money appropriated to restore and enhance land acquired with an appropriation in this act

is available for four years after the acquisition date with a maximum end date of June 30, 2034;

(3) money appropriated to restore and enhance other land is available until June 30, 2031;

(4) notwithstanding clauses (1) to (3), money appropriated for a project that receives at least 15 percent of its funding from federal funds is available until a date sufficient to match the availability of federal funding to a maximum of six years if the federal funding was confirmed and included in the original approved draft accomplishment plan; and

(5) money appropriated for other projects is available until the end of the fiscal year in which it is appropriated.

Subd. 8. **Payment Conditions and Capital Equipment Expenditures**

(a) All agreements referred to in this section must be administered on a reimbursement basis unless otherwise provided in this section. Notwithstanding Minnesota Statutes, section 16A.41, expenditures directly related to each appropriation's purpose made on or after July 1, 2026, or the date of accomplishment plan approval, whichever is later, are eligible for reimbursement unless otherwise provided in this section. For the purposes of administering appropriations and legislatively authorized agreements paid out of the outdoor heritage fund, an expense must be considered reimbursable by the administering agency when the recipient presents the agency with an invoice or a binding agreement with the landowner and the recipient attests that the

goods have been received or the landowner agreement is binding. Periodic reimbursement must be made upon receiving documentation that the items articulated in the accomplishment plan approved by the Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council have been achieved, including partial achievements as evidenced by progress reports approved by the Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council. Reasonable amounts may be advanced to projects to accommodate cash flow needs, support future management of acquired lands, or match a federal share. The advances must be approved as part of the accomplishment plan. Capital equipment expenditures for specific items in excess of $10,000 must be itemized in and approved as part of the accomplishment plan.

(b) Unless otherwise provided, no money appropriated from the outdoor heritage fund in this act may be used to acquire, restore, or enhance any real property unless the specific acquisition, restoration, or enhancement is approved as part of the accomplishment plan on the parcel list.

(c) Reimbursement of eligible expenses must be submitted no later than 12 months after the approval of the final report.

Subd. 9. **Mapping**

Each direct recipient of money appropriated in this section, as well as each recipient of a grant awarded according to this section, must provide geographic information to the Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council for mapping any lands acquired in fee with funds

appropriated in this section and open to public taking of fish and game. The commissioner of natural resources must include the lands acquired in fee with money appropriated in this section on maps showing public recreation opportunities. Maps must include information on and acknowledgment of the outdoor heritage fund, including a notation of any restrictions.

Subd. 10. **Carryforward**

(a) The availability of the appropriation for Laws 2021, First Special Session chapter 1, article 1, section 2, subdivision 5, paragraph (l), St. Louis River Restoration Initiative, Phase VIII, is extended to June 30, 2027.

(b) The availability of the appropriation for Laws 2022, chapter 77, article 1, section 2, subdivision 5, paragraph (u), Daylighting Phalen Creek, is extended to June 30, 2028.

EFFECTIVE DATE. Subdivision 10 is effective the day following final enactment.

Sec. 3. Laws 2024, chapter 106, article 1, section 2, subdivision 5, is amended to read:

Subd. 5. **Habitats**		-0-	101,294,000

(a) St. Croix Watershed Habitat Protection and Restoration, Phase 5

$4,711,000 the second year is to the commissioner of natural resources for agreements to acquire land in fee and acquire permanent conservation easements and to restore and enhance natural habitat systems in the St. Croix River watershed as follows: $1,905,000 to Trust for Public Land; $110,000 to Wild Rivers Conservancy; and $2,696,000 to Minnesota Land Trust. Up to $224,000 to

Minnesota Land Trust is to establish a monitoring and enforcement fund as approved in the accomplishment plan and subject to Minnesota Statutes, section 97A.056, subdivision 17.

(b) Pine and Leech Watershed Targeted RIM Easement Permanent Land Protection, Phase 3

$2,242,000 the second year is to the Board of Water and Soil Resources, in cooperation with the Crow Wing County Soil and Water Conservation District, to acquire permanent conservation easements of high-quality forest, wetland, and shoreline habitat. Up to $120,000 of the total amount is for establishing a monitoring and enforcement fund as approved in the accomplishment plan and subject to Minnesota Statutes, section 97A.056, subdivision 17. Subdivision 8, paragraph (b), does not apply to this project. A list of permanent conservation easements must be provided as part of the final report.

(c) Protecting Minnesota's Lakes of Outstanding Biological Significance, Phase 3

$3,321,000 the second year is to the commissioner of natural resources for agreements to acquire land in fee and permanent conservation easements and to restore and enhance lakes of outstanding biological significance in northeast and north-central Minnesota. Of this amount, $1,083,000 is to the Northern Waters Land Trust and $2,238,000 is to Minnesota Land Trust. Up to $224,000 to Minnesota Land Trust is for establishing a monitoring and enforcement fund as approved in the

accomplishment plan and subject to Minnesota Statutes, section 97A.056, subdivision 17.

(d) Shell Rock River Watershed Habitat Restoration Program, Phase 13

$2,060,000 the second year is to the commissioner of natural resources for an agreement with the Shell Rock River Watershed District to acquire land in fee and restore and enhance habitat in the Shell Rock River watershed.

(e) Cannon River Watershed Habitat Restoration and Protection Program, Phase 13

$2,555,000 the second year is to the commissioner of natural resources for agreements to acquire lands in fee and restore and enhance wildlife habitat in the Cannon River watershed as follows: $54,000 to Clean River Partners; $888,000 to Great River Greening; and $1,613,000 to Trust for Public Land.

(f) Mississippi Headwaters Habitat Corridor Project, Phase 8

$2,706,000 the second year is to acquire lands in fee and permanent conservation easements and to restore wildlife habitat in the Mississippi headwaters. Of this amount:

(1) $1,706,000 is to the commissioner of natural resources for agreements as follows: $57,000 to the Mississippi Headwaters Board and $1,649,000 to Trust for Public Land; and

(2) $1,000,000 is to the Board of Water and Soil Resources, of which up to $100,000 is to establish a monitoring and enforcement fund as approved in the accomplishment plan and

subject to Minnesota Statutes, section 97A.056, subdivision 17.

(g) Fisheries Habitat Protection on Strategic North Central Minnesota Lakes, Phase 10

$2,687,000 the second year is to the commissioner of natural resources for agreements to acquire land in fee and in permanent conservation easements and to restore and enhance wildlife habitat to sustain healthy fish habitat on coldwater lakes in Aitkin, Cass, Crow Wing, and Hubbard Counties as follows: $2,252,000 to Northern Waters Land Trust and $435,000 to Minnesota Land Trust. Up to $56,000 to Minnesota Land Trust is to establish a monitoring and enforcement fund as approved in the accomplishment plan and subject to Minnesota Statutes, section 97A.056, subdivision 17.

(h) Red River Basin Riparian Habitat Program

$5,119,000 the second year is to acquire permanent conservation easements to protect, restore, and enhance stream and riparian habitat throughout the Red River watershed. Of this amount, $169,000 is to the commissioner of natural resources for an agreement with the Red River Watershed Management Board and $4,950,000 is to the Board of Water and Soil Resources. Up to $380,000 of the total amount is for establishing a monitoring and enforcement fund as approved in the accomplishment plan and subject to Minnesota Statutes, section 97A.056, subdivision 17. Subdivision 8, paragraph (b), does not apply to this project.

A list of permanent conservation easements must be provided as part of the final report.

(i) Resilient Habitat for Heritage Brook Trout, Phase 2

$2,486,000 the second year is to the commissioner of natural resources for agreements to acquire permanent conservation easements and to restore and enhance habitat in targeted watersheds of southeast Minnesota to improve heritage brook trout and coldwater aquatic communities. Of this amount, $400,000 is to The Nature Conservancy, $612,000 is to Trout Unlimited, and $1,474,000 is to Minnesota Land Trust. Up to $168,000 to Minnesota Land Trust is to establish a monitoring and enforcement fund as approved in the accomplishment plan and subject to Minnesota Statutes, section 97A.056, subdivision 17.

(j) Southeast Minnesota Protection and Restoration, Phase 12

$3,052,000 the second year is to the commissioner of natural resources for agreements to acquire lands in fee and permanent conservation easements and to restore and enhance wildlife habitat on public lands and permanent conservation easements in southeast Minnesota as follows: $970,000 to The Nature Conservancy, $964,000 to Trust for Public Land, and $1,118,000 to Minnesota Land Trust. Up to $112,000 to Minnesota Land Trust is to establish a monitoring and enforcement fund as approved in the accomplishment plan and subject to Minnesota Statutes, section 97A.056, subdivision 17.

(k) Lower Wild Rice River Corridor Habitat Restoration, Phase 4

$2,345,000 the second year is to acquire land in permanent conservation easement and to restore river and related habitat in the Wild Rice River corridor. Of this amount, $30,000 is to the commissioner of natural resources for an agreement with the Wild Rice Watershed District and $2,315,000 is to the Board of Water and Soil Resources. The Board of Water and Soil Resources may use up to $60,000 for establishing a monitoring and enforcement fund as approved in the accomplishment plan and subject to Minnesota Statutes, section 97A.056, subdivision 17. Subdivision 8, paragraph (b), does not apply to this project. A list of permanent conservation easements must be provided as part of the final report.

(l) DNR Wildlife Management Area and Scientific and Natural Area Acquisition, Phase 16

$1,359,000 the second year is to the commissioner of natural resources to acquire in fee and restore and enhance lands for wildlife management purposes under Minnesota Statutes, section 86A.05, subdivision 8, and to acquire land in fee for scientific and natural area purposes under Minnesota Statutes, section 86A.05, subdivision 5. Subject to evaluation criteria in Minnesota Rules, part 6136.0900, priority must be given to acquiring lands that are eligible for the native prairie bank under Minnesota Statutes, section 84.96, or lands adjacent to protected native prairie.

(m) Accelerating Habitat Conservation in Southwest Minnesota, Phase 3

$2,872,000 the second year is to the commissioner of natural resources for an agreement with Minnesota Land Trust to acquire permanent conservation easements and to restore and enhance high-quality wildlife habitat in southwest Minnesota. Of this amount, up to $168,000 is to establish a monitoring and enforcement fund as approved in the accomplishment plan and subject to Minnesota Statutes, section 97A.056, subdivision 17.

(n) Sauk River Watershed Habitat Protection and Restoration, Phase 5

$3,965,000 the second year is to the commissioner of natural resources for agreements to acquire lands in fee and permanent conservation easements and restore and enhance wildlife habitat in the Sauk River watershed as follows: $375,000 to Great River Greening; $1,199,000 to Sauk River Watershed District; $1,192,000 to Pheasants Forever; and $1,199,000 to Minnesota Land Trust. Up to $168,000 to Minnesota Land Trust is to establish a monitoring and enforcement fund as approved in the accomplishment plan and subject to Minnesota Statutes, section 97A.056, subdivision 17.

(o) Metro Big Rivers, Phase 14

$8,123,000 the second year is to the commissioner of natural resources for agreements to acquire land in fee and permanent conservation easements and to restore and enhance natural habitat systems

associated with the Mississippi, Minnesota, and St. Croix Rivers and their tributaries within the metropolitan area as follows: $1,250,000 to Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge Trust, Inc.; $420,000 to Friends of the Mississippi River; $803,000 to Great River Greening; $2,750,000 to Trust for Public Land; and $2,900,000 to Minnesota Land Trust. Up to $224,000 to Minnesota Land Trust is to establish a monitoring and enforcement fund as approved in the accomplishment plan and subject to Minnesota Statutes, section 97A.056, subdivision 17.

(p) Anoka Sand Plain Habitat Conservation, Phase 9

$1,802,000 the second year is to the commissioner of natural resources for agreements to restore and enhance wildlife habitat on public lands and easements in the Anoka Sand Plain ecoregion and intersecting minor watersheds as follows: $1,508,000 to Great River Greening and $294,000 to Sherburne County.

(q) DNR Aquatic Habitat Restoration and Enhancement, Phase 7

$4,206,000 the second year is to the commissioner of natural resources to restore and enhance aquatic habitat in degraded streams and aquatic management areas and to facilitate fish passage.

(r) Minnesota Statewide Trout Habitat Enhancement

$2,308,000 the second year is to the commissioner of natural resources for an agreement with Trout Unlimited to restore and

enhance habitat for trout and other species in and along coldwater rivers, lakes, and streams throughout Minnesota.

(s) Knife River Habitat Rehabilitation, Phase 7

$1,572,000 the second year is to the commissioner of natural resources for an agreement with the Arrowhead Regional Development Commission, in cooperation with the Lake Superior Steelhead Association, to restore and enhance trout habitat in the Knife River watershed. If the Arrowhead Regional Development Commission declines to serve as the fiscal agent for the project, an alternative fiscal agent must be identified in the accomplishment plan for the project.

(t) DNR St. Louis River Restoration Initiative, Phase 11

$2,163,000 the second year is to the commissioner of natural resources to restore and enhance priority aquatic, riparian, and forest habitats in the St. Louis River estuary. Of this amount, $716,000 is for an agreement with Minnesota Land Trust.

(u) Roseau Lake Rehabilitation, Phase 2

$3,054,000 the second year is to the commissioner of natural resources for an agreement with the Roseau River Watershed District to restore and enhance the Roseau Lake and Roseau River habitat complex in Roseau County, Minnesota.

(v) Highbanks Ravine Bat Hibernaculum

$2,300,000 the second year is to the commissioner of natural resources for an agreement with the city of St. Cloud to

enhance the Highbanks Ravine Bat Hibernaculum in St. Cloud.

(w) Owámniyomni Native Landscape and River Restoration, St. Anthony Falls

$1,918,000 the second year is to the commissioner of natural resources for an agreement with Friends of the Falls to restore and enhance wildlife habitat at Upper St. Anthony Falls. This appropriation may only be spent for site grading, oak savanna, and aquatic habitat portions of the project.

(x) Silver Lake Dam Fish Passage Modification

$2,368,000 the second year is to the commissioner of natural resources for an agreement with the city of Rochester to restore and enhance aquatic habitat in Silver Lake and the south fork of the Zumbro River by modifying the existing low-head dam in Rochester.

(y) Little Devil Track River Restoration

$3,000,000 the second year is to the commissioner of natural resources for an agreement with Cook County to restore and enhance stream habitat in the Little Devil Track River.

(z) Conservation Partners Legacy Grant Program: Statewide and Metro Habitat, Phase 16

$15,000,000 the second year is to the commissioner of natural resources for a program to provide competitive matching grants of up to $500,000 to local, regional, state, and national organizations for enhancing, restoring, or protecting forests, wetlands, prairies, or habitat for fish, game, or wildlife

in Minnesota. Unless there are not enough eligible grant applications received, of this amount, at least $4,000,000 is for grants in the seven-county metropolitan area and cities with a population of 50,000 or more and at least $4,000,000 is for grants to applicants that have not previously applied for money from the outdoor heritage fund. Grants must not be made for activities required to fulfill the duties of owners of lands subject to conservation easements. Grants must not be made from the appropriation in this paragraph for projects that have a total project cost exceeding $1,000,000. Of the total appropriation, $600,000 may be spent for personnel costs, outreach, and support to first-time applicants and other direct and necessary administrative costs. Grantees may acquire land or interests in land. Easements must be permanent. Grants may not be used to establish easement stewardship accounts. The program must require a match of at least ten percent from nonstate sources for all grants. The match may be cash or in-kind. For grant applications of $25,000 or less, the commissioner must provide a separate, simplified application process. Subject to Minnesota Statutes, the commissioner of natural resources must, when evaluating projects of equal value, give priority to organizations that have a history of receiving, or a charter to receive, private contributions for local conservation or habitat projects. All restoration or enhancement projects must be on land permanently protected by a permanent covenant ensuring perpetual maintenance and protection of

restored and enhanced habitat, by a conservation easement, or by public ownership or in public waters as defined in Minnesota Statutes, section 103G.005, subdivision 15. Priority must be given to restoration and enhancement projects on public lands. Minnesota Statutes, section 97A.056, subdivision 13, applies to grants awarded under this paragraph. This appropriation is available until June 30, 2027. No less than five percent of the amount of each grant must be held back from reimbursement until the grant recipient completes a grant accomplishment report by the deadline and in the form prescribed by and satisfactory to the Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council. The commissioner must provide notice of the grant program in the summary of game and fish law prepared under Minnesota Statutes, section 97A.051, subdivision 2.

(aa) Protecting Upper Mississippi River from Invasive Carp

$12,000,000 the second year is to the commissioner of natural resources to fund activities to protect the upper Mississippi River from invasive carp. Activities within this appropriation include agreements with federal partners, such as the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, to design, construct, and begin operating and maintaining a structural deterrent for invasive carp at Lock and Dam No. 5 on the Mississippi River to protect Minnesota's aquatic habitat through an adaptive management approach. Deterrent design must be fully completed ~~within two years of the date of this appropriation~~ by June

30, 2027. Deterrent installation must be completed by June 30, 2029. Money not spent or obligated for design installation and operation of the deterrent may be used for testing technologies to support the future effectiveness of the deterrent. A detailed accomplishment plan must be submitted to and approved by the Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council before money is released. This appropriation is available until June 30, 2029.