

**6136.0700 PRIORITIES FOR ACQUISITION AND IMPROVEMENT OF CRITICAL NATURAL HABITAT.**

Subpart 1. **Specific criteria for selecting critical natural habitat.** As provided by Minnesota Statutes, section 84.944, the commissioner must consider the following specific criteria in assessing the value of a proposed critical natural habitat project:

A. the occurrence of one or more of the state's various rare natural resources including plants, animals, and undisturbed natural ecological communities as identified by the department's Natural Heritage Program;

B. the existing and potential value of the project to provide vital habitat for fish and wildlife, especially for species identified for special management consideration;

C. the threat of habitat destruction if the project is not carried out;

D. the surrounding land uses in terms of the amount and type of similar habitat and the projected loss of habitat in the area;

E. the location of the project within or adjacent to an existing management unit, including accessibility and relationship to other existing state lands or waters;

F. the integrity of the land or water parcel and the long-term viability of the project;

G. the recreational potential of the parcel including present and future demand and the opportunities to meet this demand in the surrounding area; and

H. the projected acquisition or management costs and potential future management problems.

Subp. 2. **Prioritization of proposed projects.** Proposed projects that meet one or more of the specific criteria in this part will be ranked by the commissioner in accordance with the following priorities, listed in order of decreasing importance:

A. the potential contribution to the maintenance or enhancement of populations of native plant, fish, and wildlife species listed as endangered or threatened in chapter 6134;

B. the potential contribution to the protection or enhancement of native ecological communities that are now uncommon or diminishing;

C. the benefits provided to existing or potential habitat for fish and wildlife populations; or

D. the enhancement of fish and wildlife oriented recreation.

**Statutory Authority:** *MS s 84.944*

**History:** *18 SR 83*

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