



# Wetland Habitat Protection Program



Paul Raymaker

## Conserve your wetlands, grasslands, and woods while still owning your land

Wetlands and shallow lakes provide essential habitat that waterfowl and other wildlife need to survive. Prairie Pothole Country lies within a major migratory bird flyway and is the core to the nation's "duck factory."

The Minnesota Land Trust is looking for willing landowners to participate in the Wetland Habitat Protection Program, a conservation initiative to permanently protect high quality wetland complexes in west-central Minnesota.

This brochure will help you decide if the Wetland Habitat Protection Program is right for you. Inside, there is information about the program, conservation easements, project selection criteria, and an application.

### Why apply?

- Protect Minnesota's important wildlife habitat, water quality, and beautiful open spaces
- Receive tax incentives or other compensation for a permanent conservation easement on your wetlands and their surrounding natural lands
- Preserve your family's legacy on the land
- Join a community of more than 550 dedicated landowners who steward over 55,000 acres of important Minnesota places
- Receive a free habitat management plan, with the potential for financial and technical land management assistance

### APPLICATION DEADLINE

November 1, 2018

If you would like to participate in the Wetland Habitat Protection Program, please complete and return the included application.

### Questions?

Contact Kristina Geiger at:  
(651) 917-6295 or [kgeiger@mnland.org](mailto:kgeiger@mnland.org)



**MINNESOTA LAND TRUST**  
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## What is a Conservation Easement?

The Minnesota Land Trust is seeking landowners interested in securing a lasting legacy for their lands through conservation easements.

Conservation easements are voluntary agreements through which landowners agree to limit the future use and development of their property to permanently preserve its natural features.

**Lands protected by a conservation easement remain in a landowner's private ownership, with the landowner retaining the right to use and manage the land in line with the terms of the easement. Public access is not required.**

When the land is transferred to a new owner, the easement stays with the land ensuring it is permanently preserved for generations to come.

Each conservation easement completed by the Minnesota Land Trust is individually crafted to reflect the special characteristics of the land and its uses. However, certain restrictions are required to protect the natural habitat and associated species, including:

- Feedlots are not allowed
- Buffers of 150 feet must be established along all wetlands, intermittent and perennial streams, rivers and lakes prior to closing of the easement

## Easement Value and Compensation

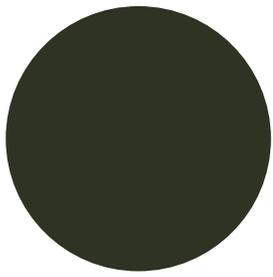
The Land Trust uses certified appraisers to ascertain the value of your land without the easement, and then the value of your land with the easement in place. The difference between the two is the easement value. The easement value results from the property rights that have been restricted and the appraised value of those rights.

Upon finalizing a conservation easement with the Land Trust, landowners will receive a one-time payment for the amount indicated in their application, up to 100% of the appraised easement value.

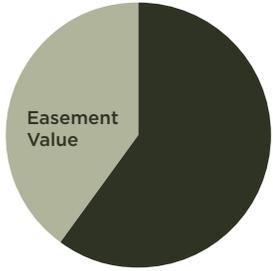
The Minnesota Land Trust is a nonprofit organization and the donation of all or a part of a conservation easement may allow the landowner to claim a tax deduction. Please consult your attorney.



## Total Property Value



**Property Value Without Easement**  
The fee title and the entire value of the property is held by landowner.

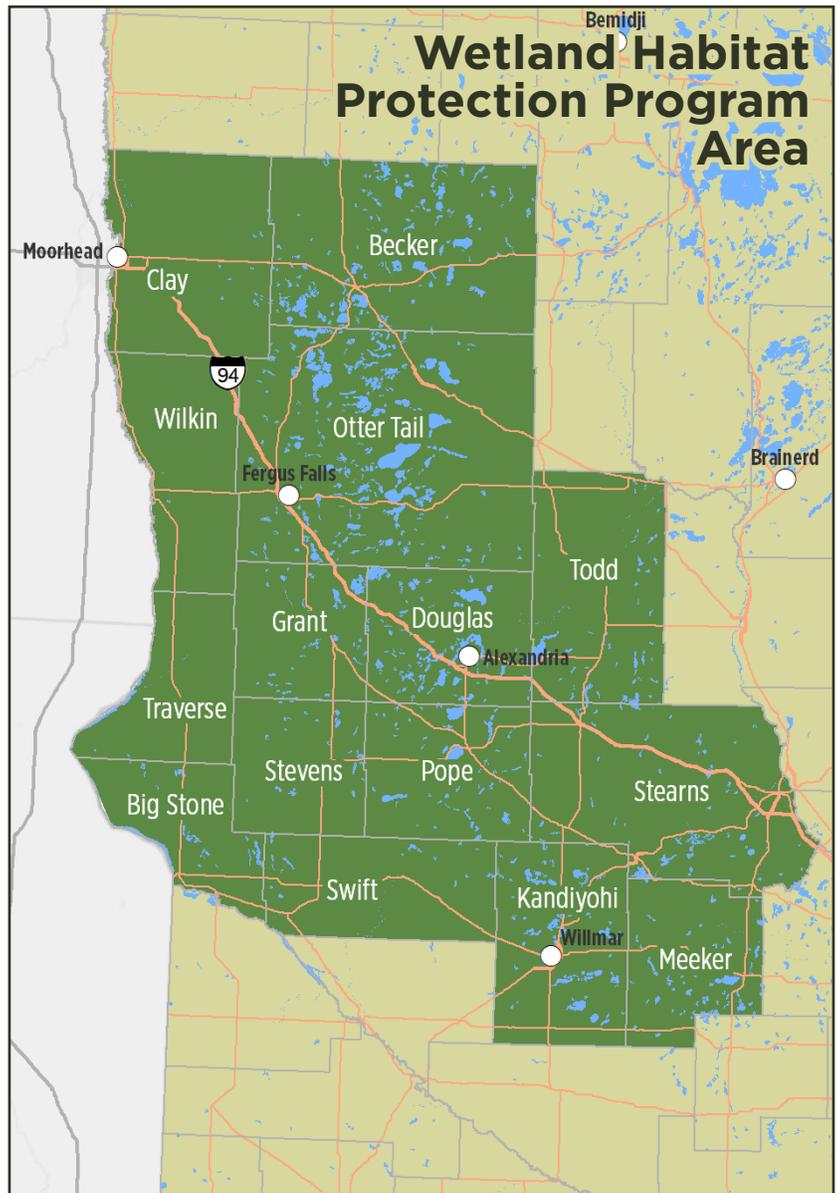


**Property Value With Easement**  
The fee title is owned by the landowner. The conservation easement is held by the Land Trust.

## Requirements to apply

Property must:

- Be located within the Wetland Habitat Protection Program area (see map)
- Be at least 40 acres in size
- Have wetlands or water bodies within the proposed easement area or contribute to conservation of adjacent wetland habitats
- Contain less than 10% of proposed easement area in cultivation



## Selection Process

### Application Review

Applications will be reviewed, ranked, and prioritized as they are received.

Applications received after the deadline may not be reviewed for the current phase of this program, but may be considered later if funding is available.

Projects that are the best fit for the Wetland Habitat Protection Program will be larger in size and will have high quality natural lands with little development.

Landowners must indicate their desired compensation—payment per acre—for the easement on their application. Please note that the Land Trust cannot pay more than the full appraised value of the easement.

The Land Trust is able to conserve more land and may prioritize your property if you opt to donate some or all of the value of the conservation easement.

### Prioritization and Selection

Easements will be funded in order of assigned priority. The Land Trust will prioritize potential parcels using two sets of criteria:

#### Ecological

- Habitat quality and quantity
- Context relative to other natural and protected lands such as parks, wildlife refuges, etc.

#### Payment per acre

- Landowner's desired compensation on a per acre basis and willingness to donate some or all of the value of the easement



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## Conserve your wetlands and wildlife habitat with the Minnesota Land Trust

Wetlands and shallow lakes are home to waterfowl and other wildlife we associate with the outdoor recreation opportunities and beautiful landscapes of our state.

The Minnesota Land Trust is seeking willing private landowners in west-central Minnesota to protect their wetlands and surrounding natural lands. The Land Trust will purchase permanent conservation easements with funding from the Outdoor Heritage Fund.

Properties will be chosen from submitted applications (see enclosed). Their selection will be based on habitat quality, amount of nearby natural lands, and the landowner's desired price per acre. Applications are due November 1, 2018.



## Mission

The Minnesota Land Trust protects and restores Minnesota's most vital natural lands in order to provide wildlife habitat, clean water, outdoor experiences, and scenic beauty for generations to come.

## Contact

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