



# Protecting Minnesota's Lakes of Outstanding Biological Significance



## Conserve shoreland and protect water quality while still owning your land

Your land is important to you and has a unique character and history. As a landowner, you can be compensated for permanently protecting your property with a conservation easement.

The Minnesota Land Trust is currently accepting applications to participate in the Lakes of Outstanding Biological Significance Program, a conservation initiative to permanently protect high quality lakes in northeast Minnesota.

This brochure will help you decide if the 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
- Preserve your family's legacy on the land
- Join a community of more than 625 dedicated landowners who steward over 65,000 acres of important Minnesota places
- Receive tax incentives or other compensation for a permanent conservation easement on your property
- Receive a free habitat management plan, with the potential for financial and technical land management assistance

## Currently Accepting Applications

If you would like to participate in the Lakes of Outstanding Biological Significance Program, please complete and return the included application.

### Questions?

Contact Pat Collins at:  
(218) 221-7770 or  
pcollins@mnland.org

### Apply Online:

[mnland.org/grants/lobs](https://mnland.org/grants/lobs)



**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.

## Easement Value and Compensation

On your application, you must specify a desired payment amount per acre. The amount you choose may affect whether your project is ranked and if it is ultimately chosen.

Applications to the program will be ranked on both the ecological value of the land to be protected

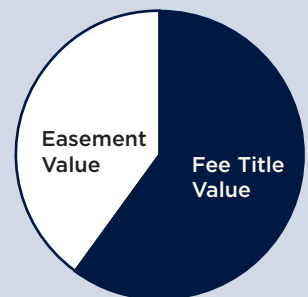
### Property Value Without Easement

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.



and the payment amount desired. **Indicating a lower desired payment per acre may result in a higher application rank.** The Land Trust will evaluate all applications received and make selections from them.

*If your application is selected,* the Land Trust will use a certified appraiser to ascertain the value of the proposed conservation easement. This is done by determining 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 ultimately stems from the property rights that have been restricted and the appraised value of those rights.

**Upon finalizing the conservation easement, you would then receive a one-time payment for the amount indicated on this application, up to 100% of the appraised easement value. The Land Trust cannot pay more than the appraised value of the**

### **conservation easement.**

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.



## Requirements to apply

### **Property must:**

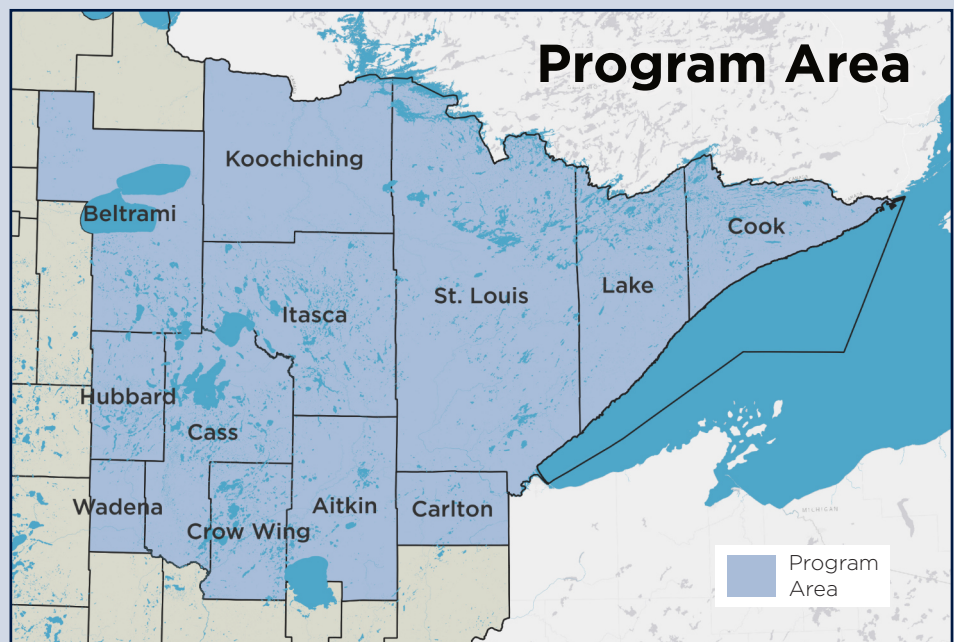
- Be located within the program area (see map). If uncertain, contact the Land Trust.
- Be at least 40 acres in size.

## Selection Process

### **Application Review**

Projects that are the best fit for the program will be larger in size and will have high quality natural lands or significant restoration potential, 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 Value**

- 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 land, legacy, fish, and wildlife habitat with the Minnesota Land Trust

Minnesota's lakeshore systems comprise one of the most biologically important habitats in the state for fish, wildlife, and native plant communities. These threatened lakes possess outstanding fisheries and provide habitat for a variety of species in greatest conservation need. Yet, these systems are highly threatened due to intense shoreland development and non-compatible management. Development and disturbance of Minnesota's remaining sensitive shoreland continues to be a threat.



Protection of undeveloped shorelines, wetlands, and forested watersheds are critical for maintaining healthy populations of fish, wildlife and plants and maintaining the water quality of these aquatic resources.

The Minnesota Land Trust is seeking willing private landowners to participate in protecting this important habitat through permanent conservation easements on their land. Properties will be chosen from submitted applications (see enclosed). Selection will be based on property size, habitat quality, landscape context, and the landowner's bid price per acre.

### 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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Program Manager

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pcollins@mnland.org

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Visit us on the web at  
[www.mnland.org](http://www.mnland.org)