



Conserve your land, legacy, and wildlife habitat with the Minnesota Land Trust

The landscape of the St. Croix River contains large swaths of unspoiled ecosystems. It is home to rolling barrens and brush lands containing abundant wildlife. Although the status of the St. Croix as a Wild and Scenic River comes with federal protections, it applies only to a thin ribbon of land adjacent to the Riverway. Beyond the Riverway boundary, more than 75% of the St. Croix's forestlands remain in private holdings.



The Minnesota Land Trust is seeking willing private landowners to protect their property. 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 April 1, August 1 and October 1, 2020. Apply early as funds are limited.

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

Bill Penning
Program Manager

Minnesota Land Trust
2356 University Ave. W.
Suite 240
St. Paul, MN 55114

(651) 262-6403
bpenning@mnland.org

Visit us on the web at
www.mnland.org

Conserve your forests, prairies, and woodlands while still owning your land

Spanning the border between Minnesota and Wisconsin, the St. Croix River is one of the nation's first federally designated Wild and Scenic Rivers. It is also home to a diverse abundance of native flora and fauna that rivals any other location within the greater Upper Mississippi River Basin.

The Minnesota Land Trust and the St. Croix River Association are looking for willing landowners to participate in the St. Croix Watershed Protection Program, a conservation initiative to permanently protect high quality habitat complexes in Minnesota.

This brochure will help you decide if the St. Croix Watershed 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
- Preserve your family's legacy on the land
- Join a community of more than 550 dedicated landowners who steward almost 60,000 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

APPLICATION DEADLINE

April 1, August 1, December 1 2020

If you would like to participate in the St. Croix Watershed Protection Program, please complete and return the included application.

Questions?

Contact Bill Penning at:
(651) 262-6403 or
bpenning@mnland.org



MINNESOTA LAND TRUST
2356 University Avenue West, Suite 240
Saint Paul MN, 55114
(651) 947-9590 • mnland.org





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

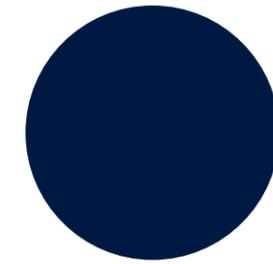
The Land Trust uses certified appraisers to ascertain the value of your land without the easement, and then the value of your land with the easement in place. The difference between the two is the easement value. The easement value results from the property rights that have been restricted and the appraised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

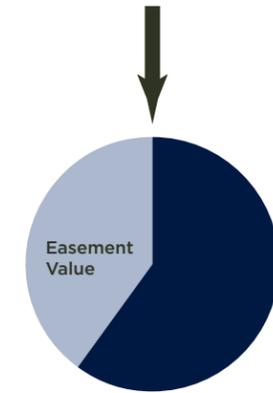
The Minnesota Land Trust is a nonprofit organization and the donation of all or a part of a conservation easement may allow the landowner to claim a tax deduction. Please consult your attorney.



Total Property Value



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

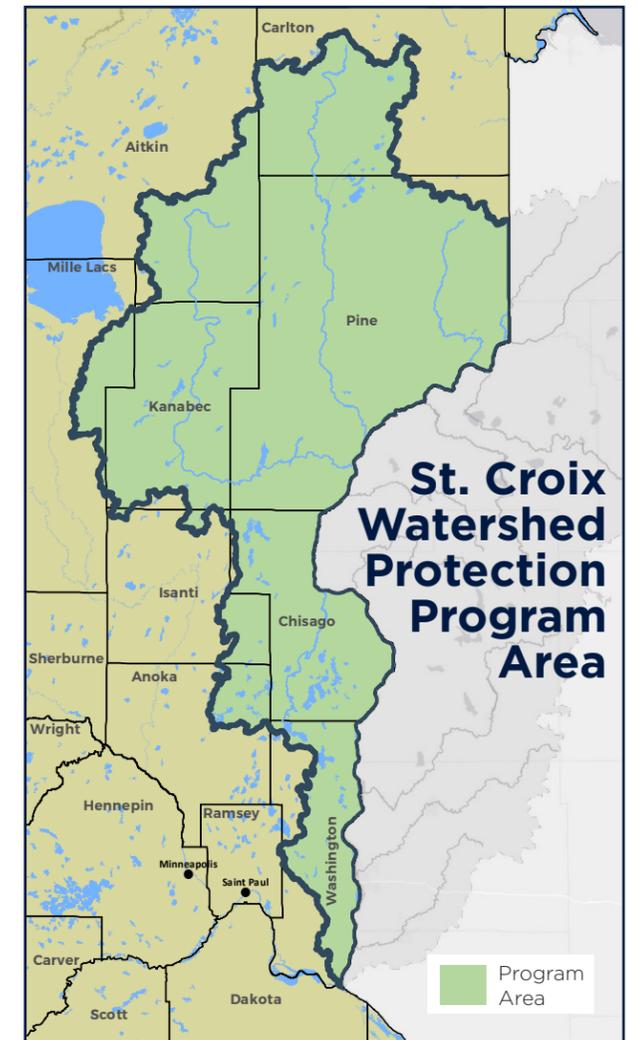


Property Value With Easement
The fee title is owned by the landowner. The conservation easement is held by the Land Trust.

Requirements to apply

Property must:

- Be located within the St. Croix Watershed Protection Program area (see map). If uncertain, please contact Bill Penning.
- Be at least 40 acres in size
- Contain less than 10% of proposed easement area in cultivation



Selection Process

Application Review

Applications will be reviewed, ranked, and prioritized in three rounds. Deadlines for consideration are April 1, August 1 and December 1, 2020. Funds are limited. Apply early.

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 St. Croix 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 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