

AUG 16 2006

2003 Project Abstract

For the Period Ending June 30, 2006

TITLE: Metropolitan Area Wildlife Corridors Phase I – The Trust for Public Land Critical Lands Protection Program (3.3)
PROJECT MANAGER: Cordelia Pierson
ORGANIZATION: The Trust for Public Land
ADDRESS: 2610 University Avenue West, Suite 300, Saint Paul, MN 55114
WEB SITE ADDRESS: www.tpl.org
FUND: Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund
LEGAL CITATION: ML 2003, Chap. 128, Art. 1, Sec. 9, Subd. 5b.

APPROPRIATION AMOUNT: \$ 420,000Overall Project Outcome and Results

In its Critical Lands Protection Program, the Trust for Public Land (TPL) protected and linked 40 acres of valuable, high quality habitat in the Twin Cities Metropolitan Region to meet habitat connectivity goals in Focus Areas 2 (Carlos Avery) – 144 acres at **Gordie Mikkelsen WMA**; 6 (Lower Mississippi) – 30 acres at **Eagan Core Greenway and Patrick Eagan Park – Caponi Art Park**, and 7 (Vermillion) – 475 acres at **Vermillion River AMA/WMA**. Within the Metro Area Wildlife Corridor project but without TPL work program funds, the Trust for Public Land assembled private and public funds and completed significant real estate work to add 17 acres to the **Pine Bend Bluffs Scientific and Natural Area** in the Lower Mississippi focus area. Not including acreage protected with other Metro Area Wildlife Corridor funds, the acreage protected totaled **562 acres valued at \$5,096,400**, with \$860,400 in other state funds and \$3,845,000 in non-state funds, exceeding the TPL commitment of \$168,000 in private and public match funds. TPL transferred \$29,000 to DNR for Vermillion River AMA/WMA development, and shifted \$11,000 from transaction costs to acquisition funds.

With its Metro Wildlife Corridor partners, TPL helped protect a wide variety of landscapes connecting vital habitat corridors, and built partnerships with many additional private and public agencies and individuals. These lands and waters will now provide people access to a wide variety of exceptional places: oak forest and wetlands for hunting and outdoor recreation in the Anoka Sand Plain; dry prairie blufflands overlooking a spectacular Mississippi River valley; glacial lakes and woodlands connecting regional and local parks within easy reach of families; and an outstanding trout stream with wildlife habitat complementing a major natural area complex adjacent to both a proposed regional park and University research lands.

Project Results Use and Dissemination

TPL posted project information on the TPL website, www.tpl.org, in addition to DNR's posting at its web site. TPL included project descriptions in its newsletters and worked with project partners to complete press releases for each of the projects. TPL helped maintain an electronic mailing list of interested parties in each focus area. Land acquired has been or will be posted by the acquiring agency.

LCMR 2003 Final Work Program Report

Project Completion Date: June 30, 2006
Date of Final Report: August 11, 2006
Date of Work Program Approval: July 9, 2003

I. PROJECT TITLE:

**Metropolitan Area Wildlife Corridors Phase I – The Trust for Public Land
Critical Lands Protection Program (3.3)**

Project Manager: Cordelia Pierson
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Total Biennial LCMR Project Budget: LCMR Appropriation: \$ 420,000
Minus Amount Spent: \$ 391,000
Balance before amendment: \$ 29,000

Approved Amendment:

Shift \$11,000 from TPL Land Transaction Costs to TPL Acquisition;
Transfer \$29,000 from TPL Land Transaction Costs and Development to
DNR Fisheries and Wildlife Development

Total Biennial LCMR Project Budget: LCMR Appropriation: \$ 420,000
Minus Amount Spent: \$ 391,000
Minus Amount Transferred: \$ 29,000
Balance: \$ 0

First year appropriation: \$420,000

Second year appropriation: carry over from first year

Legal Citation: ML 2003, Chap. 128, Art. 1, Sec. 9, Subd. 5b.

Appropriation Language: (b) Metropolitan Area Wildlife Corridors
\$2,425,000 the first year and \$2,425,000 the second year are from the trust fund to the commissioner of natural resources. \$3,550,000 of this appropriation is for acceleration of agency programs and cooperative agreements with the Trust for Public Land, Ducks Unlimited, Inc., Friends of the Mississippi River, Great River Greening, Minnesota Land Trust, and Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge Trust, Inc., for the purposes of planning, improving, and protecting important natural areas in the metropolitan region, as defined by Minnesota Statutes, section 473.121, subdivision 2, through grants, contracted services, conservation easements, and fee acquisition. \$500,000 of this appropriation is for an agreement with the city of

Ramsey for the Trott Brook Corridor acquisition. \$800,000 of this appropriation is for an agreement with the Rice Creek Watershed District for Hardwood Creek acquisition and restoration. Land acquired with this appropriation must be sufficiently improved to meet at least minimum management standards as determined by the commissioner of natural resources. As part of the required work program, criteria and priorities for planned acquisition and restoration activities must be submitted to the legislative commission on Minnesota resources for review and approval before expenditure. Expenditures are limited to the identified project areas as defined in the work program. This appropriation may not be used for the purchase of residential structures unless expressly approved in the work program. Any land acquired in fee title by the commissioner of natural resources with money from this appropriation must be designated: (1) as an outdoor recreation unit under Minnesota Statutes, section 86A.07; or (2) as provided in Minnesota Statutes, sections 89.018, subdivision 2, paragraph (a); 97A.101; 97A.125; 97C.001; and 97C.011. The commissioner may so designate any lands acquired in less than fee title. This appropriation is available until June 30, 2006, at which time the project must be completed and final products delivered, unless an earlier date is specified in the work program.

II. and III. FINAL PROJECT SUMMARY: *required to be same as project abstract*

In its Critical Lands Protection Program, the Trust for Public Land (TPL) protected and linked 40 acres of valuable, high quality habitat in the Twin Cities Metropolitan Region to meet habitat connectivity goals in Focus Areas 2 (Carlos Avery) – 144 acres at **Gordie Mikkelson WMA**; 6 (Lower Mississippi) – 30 acres at **Eagan Core Greenway and Patrick Eagan Park – Caponi Art Park**, and 7 (Vermillion) – 475 acres at **Vermillion River AMA/WMA**. Within the Metro Area Wildlife Corridor project but without TPL work program funds, the Trust for Public Land assembled private and public funds and completed significant real estate work to add 17 acres to the **Pine Bend Bluffs Scientific and Natural Area** in the Lower Mississippi focus area. Not including acreage protected with other Metro Area Wildlife Corridor funds, the acreage protected totaled **562 acres valued at \$5,096,400**, with \$860,400 in other state funds and \$3,845,000 in non-state funds, exceeding the TPL commitment of \$168,000 in private and public match funds. TPL transferred \$29,000 to DNR for Vermillion River AMA/WMA development, and shifted \$11,000 from transaction costs to acquisition funds.

With its Metro Wildlife Corridor partners, TPL helped protect a wide variety of landscapes connecting vital habitat corridors, and built partnerships with many additional private and public agencies and individuals. These lands and waters will now provide people access to a wide variety of exceptional places: oak forest and wetlands for hunting and outdoor recreation in the Anoka Sand Plain; dry prairie blufflands overlooking a spectacular Mississippi River valley; glacial lakes and woodlands connecting regional and local parks within easy reach of families; and an outstanding trout stream with wildlife habitat complementing a major natural area complex adjacent to both a proposed regional park and University research lands.

IV. OUTLINE OF PROJECT RESULTS:

Result 1: Acquire Significant Habitat

Description:

The Trust for Public Land (TPL) secured fee title on 40 acres of valuable, high quality habitat in the Twin Cities Metropolitan Region in three of the twelve identified focus areas: (2) Carlos Avery, (6) Lower Mississippi, and (7) Vermillion River. TPL used \$391,000 of the LCMR funds for capital costs of acquisition, and did not use LCMR funds for the transaction costs (appraisals, legal fees, surveys, environmental assessments, closings and agency expenses). TPL transferred \$29,000 to the DNR to develop the Vermillion River AMA/WMA to agency standards.

Approved Amendment:

**Shift \$11,000 from TPL Land Transaction Costs to TPL Acquisition;
Transfer \$29,000 from TPL Land Transaction Costs and Development to
DNR Fisheries and Wildlife Development**

Summary Budget Information for Result 1:	LCMR Budget	\$420,000
	Funds spent:	\$391,000
	Funds transferred:	\$ 29,000
	Balance	\$ 0

Total Biennial LCMR Project Budget – with Approved Amendment:

LCMR Appropriation:	\$ 420,000
Minus Amount Spent:	\$ 391,000
Funds Transferred:	\$ 29,000
Equal Balance:	\$ 0

Result Status as of June 30, 2006:

The **Gordie Mikkelson Wildlife Management Area** in northern Anoka County has provided a natural retreat for hunters, hikers and birdwatchers alike, and is becoming an increasingly rare entity amidst growing subdivisions. This 145-acre addition of oak forest and wetlands will connect to a greater web of protected natural areas throughout the Twin Cities Metropolitan Region, enhancing wildlife corridors and providing for an extended system of parks and habitat for Minnesotans to enjoy.

TPL's Minnesota Office (TPL) was asked to help on this priority acquisition for the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) in November 2003. In a near-record 4-month period, TPL purchased and conveyed 145 acres adjacent to the Gordie Mikkelson Wildlife Management Area to the DNR. The land will be managed under the DNR's Wildlife Management Division.

Pine Bend Scientific and Natural Area in Dakota County: To add 17 acres to the Pine Bend Bluffs Scientific and Natural Area in the Lower Mississippi focus area, the Trust for Public Land negotiated the acquisition, put together the funding package including private funding, acquired the land, prepared it for DNR use, completed due diligence, and conveyed it to DNR, working closely with DNR Scientific and Natural Area Program and Metro Greenways, and complementing the work of Friends of the

Mississippi River; while TPL did not use TPL Metro Wildlife Corridor funds for this project, other partners could achieve Metro Wildlife Corridor objectives with their funds because of TPL's real estate work and expertise.

Located in one of the fastest growing counties in Minnesota and the Midwest, the Pine Bend Bluffs SNA provides a rare oasis for wildlife and people alike. The acquisition of this 17-acre property, with its 660 feet of river frontage and elevated bluff, protects some of the signature views of the Mississippi River Valley that draw people to this place, while introducing them to natural landscapes that dominate the area, including remnant prairie, dry oak and white pine-hardwood forest representative of pre-settlement landscapes. Today, more than 300 species of birds depend on the Mississippi flyway for spring and fall migrations. The protection of this land as part of the larger 1300-acre Pine Bend Bluffs landscape will help to ensure the health of these migratory routes while providing people of the Twin Cities with an exceptional natural area only minutes from the heart of the metropolitan region.

Partner on Gordie Mikkelsen WMA project	Funding Source	Funding	Allocated Acreage	Notes
TPL	Metro Wildlife Corridors	\$100,000	17.5	Lead
DNR Wildlife	Federal Land and Water Conservation Fund – State Wildlife Grant	\$275,000	48	Fee owner
Metro Greenways	State bonding	\$450,000	78.5	
TOTAL		\$825,000	144	

Eagan Core Greenway – Caponi Art Park: With help from TPL, two local artists are achieving a lifetime dream of creating an exciting public park celebrating art in harmony with nature. Anthony and Cheryl Caponi have dedicated their lives to creating a unique "art park" on their land with original sculptures lining the winding trails through this wooded landscape. The new park is located in the City of Eagan and connects existing City parkland on both the north and southeast. It is a vital link in the Eagan Core Greenway, a swath of green space in one of the Twin Cities more popular suburbs. Half of the art park's 60-acres of rolling hills and woodland will be acquired by the City and remain largely natural. The other half will be owned by a nonprofit organization, the Caponi Art Park, and continue to host sculptures, performing art and educational programs. All of the land will be managed as one park and open to the public. In this unique public/private partnership, people from all walks of life will be able to experience art in a natural setting, and benefit from the further protection of land in the Eagan Core Greenway.

The effort leading up to the land protection was long and involved many people and organizations. The Friends of the Eagan Core Greenway – citizens in Eagan – was instrumental in the long-term development of the Greenway and individual conservation efforts that create the greenway. The Trust for Public Land facilitated the public acquisition of the Caponi property with funding provided by a variety of important supporters including the City of Eagan, the Dakota County Farmland and Natural Area Program, the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources Outdoor Recreation division, a DNR Remediation Fund, and the Trust for Public Land through the Metro Wildlife Corridor Partnership as recommended by the Legislative Commission on Minnesota Resources from the Minnesota Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund. The McKnight Foundation also was instrumental in the protection of this and other Eagan Core Greenway lands.

Partner on Eagan Core Greenway project	Funding Source	Funding	Allocated Acreage	Notes
TPL	Metro Wildlife Corridors	\$191,000	2.5	Lead
City of Eagan		\$720,000	9.5	Fee owner
Dakota County	Farmland and Natural Area Program	\$850,000	11	
DNR Outdoor Recreation Grant	LAWCON	\$200,000	3	
DNR Remediation Fund Grant	Pooled proceeds from state insurance settlements	\$300,000	4	
TOTAL		\$2,261,000	30	

TPL requested a work plan amendment described below to complete the Vermillion River project. TPL requested:

- shift \$11,000 in funds within LCMR cost categories budgeted for TPL, from “Other” (Land transaction costs) to Land Acquisition
- transfer a total of \$29,000 from TPL land transaction and development costs to another project partner, DNR, for development costs associated with this project.

Vermillion River AMA/WMA: Of the few remaining viable trout streams near the Twin Cities metropolitan region, the Vermillion River ranks as one of the best. Its wooded banks, winding path and cool waters create a great habitat for trout. A dedicated effort by local officials and conservationists is actively protecting undeveloped stretches of the river before it is completely consumed by the growth edging southward through Dakota County. Working with a local family, TPL

acquired 475 acres of land, including over a mile of both banks of the Vermillion and a scenic knoll with panoramic views of the river. The land will be managed by the Minnesota DNR as an aquatic and wildlife management area, ensuring outdoor enthusiasts a place to continue to experience some of Minnesota's finest trout fishing and wildlife close to home.

Partner on Vermillion River project	Funding Source	Funding	Allocated Acreage	Notes
TPL	Metro Wildlife Corridors	\$100,000	19	Lead
DNR Fisheries and Wildlife	Metro Wildlife Corridors	\$453,950	87; 1 mile shoreline	Fee owner
Metro Greenways	Metro Wildlife Corridors	\$110,400	21	
DNR	Federal Land and Water Conservation Fund - Stateside Grant	\$800,000	154	
Dakota County	Farmland and Natural Area Program	\$1,000,000	194	
TOTAL		\$2,464,350	475	

In summary, in the project to date, the Trust for Public Land has accomplished the following:

The Trust for Public Land (TPL) conveyed 144 acres to the DNR as an addition to the Gordie-Mikkelson Wildlife Management Area on March 29, 2004. To add 17 acres to the Pine Bend Bluffs Scientific and Natural Area in the Lower Mississippi focus area, the Trust for Public Land negotiated the acquisition, put together the funding package including private funding, acquired the land, prepared it for DNR use, completed due diligence, and conveyed it to DNR, working closely with DNR Scientific and Natural Area Program and Metro Greenways, and complementing the work of Friends of the Mississippi River; while TPL did not use TPL Metro Wildlife Corridor funds for this project, other partners could achieve Metro Wildlife Corridor objectives with their funds because of TPL's real estate work and expertise. The Trust for Public Land acquired 30 acres, the Eagan Core Greenway – Caponi Art Park, and conveyed it to the City of Eagan on March 15, 2005. On November 22, 2005, the Trust for Public Land conveyed +/- 475 acres in the Vermillion River Focus Area to the Department of Natural Resources Wildlife and Fisheries Division for management as a Wildlife Management Area and Aquatic Management Area. The Trust for Public Land protected a total of 40 acres with \$391,000, applied \$860,400 in state funds to protect an additional 103 acres, and leveraged a total of \$3,845,000 in non-state funds to protect an additional 419 acres. Please see the attached

tables for a summary of each project acreage and funds from the Trust for Public Land work program.

V. TOTAL LCMR PROJECT BUDGET:

All Results: Personnel: \$ 0

All Results: Equipment: \$ 0

All Results: Development: \$ 20,000 (Development associated with land transaction (signage, fencing, access); work performed by agency owner and paid for by TPL)

All Results: Acquisition: \$ 380,000 (capital costs; includes fee title or easement acquisition)

All Results: Other: \$ 20,000 (Land transaction costs: title, survey, environmental assessment, appraisal)

TOTAL LCMR PROJECT BUDGET: \$ 420,000

Explanation of Capital Expenditures Greater Than \$3,500: NA

APPROVED WORK PLAN AMENDMENT AND TOTAL LCMR PROJECT BUDGET:

All Results: Personnel: \$ 0

All Results: Equipment: \$ 0

All Results: Development: \$ 0 (\$20,000 transferred to DNR Fisheries and Wildlife for Development associated with a TPL partnership land transaction project (signage, fencing, access); work paid for and performed by agency owner, instead of work performed by agency owner and paid for by TPL)

All Results: Acquisition: \$ 391,000 (increased by \$11,000 from "Other"; capital costs; includes fee title or easement acquisition)

All Results: Other: \$ 0 (\$11,000 shifted to Acquisition; \$9,000 transferred to DNR Fisheries and Wildlife Development)

TOTAL LCMR PROJECT BUDGET as amended (APPROVED): \$ 391,000

Total transferred to DNR Fisheries and Wildlife: \$ 29,000

TOTAL LCMR PROJECT BUDGET, AS AMENDED:

All Results: Personnel: \$ 0

All Results: Equipment: \$ 0

All Results: Development: \$ 0

All Results: Acquisition: \$ 391,000

All Results: Other: \$ 0

TOTAL LCMR PROJECT BUDGET as amended: \$ 391,000

Transferred to DNR Fisheries and Wildlife: \$ 29,000

VI. PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE SPENDING:

A. Past Spending:

TPL has provided a significant in-kind contribution to development of the project, including shaping the initial proposal, facilitating partner and stakeholder communications, arranging stakeholder meetings held in October 2002, printing maps and producing project descriptions for stakeholder participation, organizing proposed focus area meetings held in March 2003, soliciting land acquisition project proposals, and laying the groundwork for project initiation in July 2003. Total in-kind contribution to date is equivalent to ¼ FTE. TPL has also invested land acquisition capital of \$50,000 to help the DNR purchase land in Dec. 2002 in the Lower Mississippi focus area for the new Pine Bend Bluffs Scientific and Natural Area, where restoration funds from other partners for this project will likely be invested.

B. Current Spending:

During the project period, TPL leveraged approximately \$3,845,000 from local, federal and private funds for habitat protection work, compared to a target total of \$168,000. These funds would not have been available for use in Minnesota but for this Metropolitan Area Wildlife Corridors Phase I project. In addition, TPL covered and did not seek reimbursement for transaction costs and the substantial staff, phone, travel and office expenses associated with the land transaction work as well as all costs associated with Metropolitan Area Wildlife Corridors Phase I project partnership.

C. Required Match (if applicable): NA**D. Future Spending:**

The Metropolitan Area Wildlife Corridors Phase I partnership intends to approach LCMR for funding for each of the next 9 biennia for a total of 10 phases or 20 years. The Metropolitan Area Wildlife Corridors partnership anticipates requesting funding in the range of \$20 million per biennium. The partnership expects to secure twice as much in other funds as a result of this habitat protection partnership.

VII. Project Partners:**A. Partners Receiving LCMR Funds:**

TPL coordinated its work with other LCMR-funded partners of the Metropolitan Area Wildlife Corridor Project. TPL transferred interests in land to the DNR and the City of Eagan, and in the case of a DNR acquisition, transferred development funds to the DNR. TPL did not seek reimbursement for staff time or for real estate transaction costs such as environmental assessments, appraisals and title review.

B. Project Cooperators:

Project cooperators, in addition to project partners, include:

- Landowners
- Minnesota Pollution Control Agency
- Metropolitan Council
- Anoka Conservation District and Dakota SWCD

- Anoka County, Dakota County, and Dakota County Farmland and Natural Area Program
- Watershed Districts & Water Management Organizations
- City of Eagan, Empire Township, Linwood Township and other cities and townships in the seven-county metropolitan region
- DNR Local Grants Program
- DNR Remediation Fund Grant Program
- Nonprofit organizations and citizen groups advancing land conservation

VIII. DISSEMINATION:

TPL posted project information on the TPL website, www.tpl.org, in addition to DNR's posting at its web site. TPL included project descriptions in its newsletters and worked with project partners to complete press releases for each of the projects. TPL helped maintain an electronic mailing list of interested parties in each focus area. Land acquired has been or will be posted.

IX. LOCATION:

The Trust for Public Land worked in the focus areas (see map).

2. Carlos Avery
6. Lower Mississippi River
7. Vermillion River

X. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS:

Periodic work program progress reports were submitted in February 2004; August 2004; February 2005; August 2005; and February 2006. This concludes the final work program report with associated products submitted by August 15, 2006.

Attachment A: \$3.55M Budget Detail for 2003 Projects - TPL Final Report August 2006**Proposal Title:** *Metro Wildlife Corridors (A-1) 14***Project Manager Name:** *Peggy Booth***LCMR Recommended Dollars:** *\$3,550,000***Project Partner:** *The Trust for Public Land, Cordelia Pierson***Work description:** *Critical Lands Protection (3.3)***LCMR Recommended Dollars:** *\$ 420,000***WORK AMENDMENT GRANTED:**

Shifted \$11,000 from Land Transaction costs to Acquisition Costs;

Transferred \$29,000 to DNR Fisheries and Wildlife for Development Costs

\$9,000 from TPL Land Transaction Costs, and \$20,000 from TPL Development Costs

Budget Item	TPL	August 2005 Update Expenditures	August 2005 Current Balance	Approved Work Amendment Balance	February 2006 Update	Balance
RESULT 1 (Project Result 3)						
Development associated with land transaction (signage, fencing, access)	\$20,000		\$20,000			\$0
DNR Wildlife and Fisheries Development				\$29,000		
Acquisition: fee or easements	\$380,000	\$291,000	\$89,000	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$0
Other: Land transaction costs: title, survey, environmental assessment, appraisal	\$20,000		\$20,000			\$0
COLUMN TOTAL	\$420,000	\$291,000	\$129,000	\$129,000	\$100,000	\$0
Acreage acquired at \$3.55M	40	21	19		19	40
FTE	\$0					0