2008 Project Abstract

For the Period Ending June 30, 2010

PROJECT TITLE: Metro Conservation Corridors (MeCC) Phase IV-Friends of the Mississippi River (2.1)
PROJECT MANAGER: Tom Lewanski
AFFILIATION: Friends of the Mississippi River
MAILING ADDRESS: 360 North Robert Street, Suite 400
CITY/STATE/ZIP: St. Paul, MN 555101
PHONE: 651-222-2193 ext. 12
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WEBSITE: www.fmr.org
FUNDING SOURCE: Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund
LEGAL CITATION: ML 2008, Chap. 367, Sec. 2, Subd. 3(a)2.1

#### **APPROPRIATION AMOUNT: \$** 92,000

#### **Overall Project Outcome and Results**

The Twin Cities contains significant natural areas. There is a concerted effort to identify, protect, and improve these areas. FMR's goal with this project was to partner with landowners to improve the ecological health of a selected number of protected natural areas. During the course of this phase of the MeCC project, FMR conducted activities at 11 sites. These sites are either public or permanently protected privately owned. A management plan exists for each site, which served as guide for the restoration and enhancement activities. These sites included:

- Pine Bend Bluffs SNA. Mowed 2-acres on the installed prairie, and controlled weeds on 24acres.
- Katharine Ordway Natural History Study Area. Controlled buckthorn on 3-acres.
- City of Hastings Sand Coulee. Controlled weeds on 4-acres within the City's portion of the prairie.
- Hastings Sand Coulee Prairie SNA. Controlled weedy plants on 17 acres. Conducted a prescribed burn on 14-acres.
- Hastings WMA. Treated Buckthorn and cut shrubs on 17-acres of the prairie and conducted a prescribed burn on 13-acres.
- Rosemount Wildlife Preserve. Controlled buckthorn on 18-acres of woodland.
- Wilmar Property. Invasive plant control on 12-acres of woodland and broadcasted prairie seed on 28-acres along the Vermillion River. This private property is permanently protected by a conservation easement through the Dakota County FNAP.
- **St. Paul Parks.** Installed woodland plants and direct seeded acorns in woodland and installed plants and mowed installed prairie for a total of 4 acres within Crosby Park.
- Hastings Riverflats Park. Controlled buckthorn over a 40-acre area.
- Gores Pool Wildlife Management Area and Aquatic Management Area. Controlled exotic invasive woody plants on 67-acres.
- Ravenna Block Greenway-Dakota County. Controlled weedy plants on 12-acres and conducted a prescribed burn on an additional 20 acres. These activities were conducted on two private parcels permanently protected by conservation easements through the Dakota County FNAP.

#### **Project Results Use and Dissemination**

FMR disseminates information about our restoration and enhancement projects in a couple of ways. We include stories on our website and in our newsletters about projects. Visit the following webpage for an example: http://www.fmr.org/news/current/crosby\_farm\_restoration-2008-01. We also organize many tours and stewardship events at the sites at which we conduct restoration activities. We share information about this project with the participants of these events.

# Trust Fund 2008 Work Program Final Report and 2009 Work Program

Date of Report: Final Report		8/1/10		
	ate of Work program A oject Completion Date		<b>M.L. 2008</b> June 10, 2008 June, 30 2010	June 16, 2009
I.	PROJECT TITLE:	of the Mis Metro Co	ssissippi River (2. nservation Corrid	lors (MeCC) Phase IV-Friends 1) lors (MeCC) Phase V – nificant Watershed Habitat (2.3)
	Project Manager: Affiliation: Mailing Address: City / State / Zip: Telephone Number: E-mail Address: Fax Number: Web Page address:	360 North St. Paul, 651 222-2	f the Mississippi   n Robert Street, S MN 55101 2193 Ext. 12 @fmr.org 6005	
	Location:		• •	in the counties of Dakota, sey, Anoka, and Washington.

Total Trust Fund Project Budget:	M.L. 2008	M.L. 2009	Total
Trust Fund Appropriation:	\$92,000	\$90,000	\$182,000
Minus Amount Spent:	\$92,000	\$3661.60	\$95,661.60
Equal Balance:	\$0	\$86,338.40	\$86,338.40

Legal Citation: ML 2008, Chap. 367, Sec. 2, Subd. 3(a)2.1

#### 2008 Appropriation Language:

\$3,150,000 is from the trust fund to the commissioner of natural resources for the fourth appropriation for acceleration of agency programs and cooperative agreements. Of this appropriation, \$1,915,000 is for Department of Natural Resources agency programs and \$1,235,000 is for agreements as follows: \$475,000 with the Trust for Public Land; \$92,000 with Friends of the Mississippi River; \$111,000 with Great River Greening; \$225,000 with Minnesota Land Trust; \$225,000 with Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge Trust, Inc.; and \$107,000 with Friends of the Minnesota Valley for the purposes of planning, restoring, and protecting important natural areas in the metropolitan area, as defined under Minnesota Statutes, section 473.121, subdivision 2, and portions of the surrounding counties, through grants, contracted services, conservation easements, and fee title acquisition. Land acquired with this appropriation must be sufficiently improved to meet at least minimum management standards as determined by the commissioner of natural resources. Expenditures are limited to the identified project corridor 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. All

conservation easements must be perpetual and have a natural resource management plan. Any land acquired in fee title by the commissioner of natural resources with money from this appropriation must be designated as an outdoor recreation unit under Minnesota Statutes, section 86A.07. The commissioner may similarly designate any lands acquired in less than fee title. A list of proposed restorations and fee title and easement acquisitions must be provided as part of the required work program. All funding for conservation easements must include a long-term stewardship plan and funding for monitoring and enforcing the agreement.

# Legal Citation: M.L. 2009, Chp. 143, Sec. 2, Subdivision 4(f)2.3

#### 2009 Appropriation Language:

\$3,375,000 is from the trust fund to the commissioner of natural resources for the fifth appropriation for acceleration of agency programs and cooperative agreements. Of this appropriation, \$2,185,000 is for Department of Natural Resources agency programs and \$1,190,000 is for agreements as follows: \$380,000 with the Trust for Public Land; \$90,000 with Friends of the Mississippi River; \$155,000 with Great River Greening; \$250,000 with Minnesota Land Trust; \$225,000 with Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge Trust, Inc.; and \$90,000 with Friends of the Minnesota Valley for the purposes of planning, restoring, and protecting important natural areas in the metropolitan area, as defined under Minnesota Statutes, section 473.121, subdivision 2, and portions of the surrounding counties, through grants, contracted services, technical assistance, conservation easements, and fee title acquisition. Land acquired with this appropriation must be sufficiently improved to meet at least minimum management standards as determined by the commissioner of natural resources. Expenditures are limited to the identified project corridor 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. All conservation easements must be perpetual and have a natural resource management plan. Any land acquired in fee title by the commissioner of natural resources with money from this appropriation must be designated as an outdoor recreation unit under Minnesota Statutes, section 86A.07. The commissioner may similarly designate any lands acquired in less than fee title. A list of proposed restorations and fee title and easement acquisitions must be provided as part of the required work program. All funding for conservation easements must include a long-term stewardship plan and funding for monitoring and enforcing the agreement. To the maximum extent practical, consistent with contractual easement or fee acquisition obligations, the recipients shall utilize staff resources to identify future projects and shall maximize the implementation of biodiverse, quality restoration projects in the project proposal into the first half of the 2010 fiscal year.

## II. PROJECT SUMMARY AND RESULTS:

#### M.L. 2009

FMR will work with both public and private landowners to restore and/or enhance 50 acres of significant habitat using MeCC phase V funding. This funding will enable FMR to leverage non-state funding to restore an additional 30 acres of significant habitat.

#### III. PROGRESS SUMMARY AS OF (02/01/09):

<u>M.L. 2009</u> N.A.

#### PROGRESS SUMMARY AS OF (08/01/09):

<u>M.L. 2009</u>

FMR has not begun any restoration or enhancement projects using the 2009 appropriation as of the date of this report. Much of the funding has been allocated to specific projects but work has not yet commenced.

#### PROGRESS SUMMARY AS OF (02/01/10):

#### <u>M.L. 2009</u>

FMR has not begun any restoration projects utilizing M.L. 2009 funding. However, we have identified several projects that we will begin once we have completed phase IV or upon receiving permission to begin phase V before completing phase IV.

#### PROGRESS SUMMARY AS OF (08/01/10):

#### M.L. 2009

During this time period FMR conducted a prescribed burn on 20 acres of prairie on the City of Hastings' property in the Sand Coulee. In addition, we mowed and conducted weed control activities on 13-acres of the Hastings Sand Coulee SNA. Utilizing non-state leveraged funds we mowed 15-acres of prairie at the Pine Bend Bluffs SNA.

## M.L. 2008 II and III. Final Project Summary

The Twin Cities contains significant natural areas. There is a concerted effort to identify, protect, and improve these areas. FMR's goal with this project was to partner with landowners to improve the ecological health of a selected number of protected natural areas. During the course of this phase of the MeCC project, FMR conducted activities at 11 sites. These sites are either public or permanently protected privately owned. Management Plan is in place for each site, which served as guides for the restoration and enhancement activities. These sites included:

- **Pine Bend Bluffs SNA**. Mowed 2-acres on the installed prairie, and controlled weeds on 24-acres.
- Katharine Ordway Natural History Study Area. Controlled buckthorn on 3acres.
- City of Hastings Sand Coulee. Controlled weeds on 4-acres within the City's portion of the prairie.
- Hastings Sand Coulee Prairie SNA. Controlled weedy plants on 17 acres. Conducted a prescribed burn on 14-acres.
- Hastings WMA. Treated Buckthorn and cut shrubs on 17-acres of the prairie and conducted a prescribed burn on 13-acres.
- Rosemount Wildlife Preserve. Controlled buckthorn on 18-acres of woodland.
- Wilmar Property. Invasive plant control on 12-acres of woodland and broadcasted prairie seed on 28-acres along the Vermillion River. This private property is permanently protected by a conservation easement through the Dakota County FNAP.

- St. Paul Parks. Installed woodland plants and direct seeded acorns in woodland and installed plants and mowed installed prairie for a total of 4 acres within Crosby Park.
- Hastings Riverflats Park. Controlled buckthorn over a 40-acre area.
- Gores Pool Wildlife Management Area and Aquatic Management Area. Controlled exotic invasive woody plants on 67-acres.
- Ravenna Block greenway-Dakota County. Controlled weedy plants on 12acres and conducted a prescribed burn on an additional 20 acres. These activities were conducted on two private parcels permanently protected by conservation easements through the Dakota County FNAP.

# IV. OUTLINE OF PROJECT RESULTS:

Result 1: N/A (see Overall Work Program Summary)

#### **Result 2:** Restore & Enhance Significant Habitat:

#### **Description:**

#### M.L. 2008

FMR worked with both public and private landowners to restore and/or enhance 215 acres of significant habitat using MWC IV funding and an additional 80 acres of significant habitat using other funding for a total of 295 acres, which included the restoration and/or enhancement of prairie, oak savanna, and deciduous forest communities. Techniques that were employed to restore and enhance these areas were based on the specific requirements of each project site to chosen, but included: soil preparation (spraying, burning, disking, dragging), seed drilling, mowing, prescribed burning, spot spraying, installation of native plants, and removal of invasive plant species.

These restoration and/or enhancement activities were targeted to: See Exhibit 1 for a list of targeted projects and associated activities.

#### <u>M.L. 2009</u>

FMR will work with both public and private landowners to restore and/or enhance 50 acres of significant habitat using MeCC phase V funding. This funding will enable FMR to leverage non-state funding to restore an additional 30 acres of significant habitat.

Specific habitat types that may be restored and/or enhanced include prairie, oak savanna, deciduous forest and/or wetland communities. Techniques that will be employed to restore and enhance these areas will be based on the specific requirements of each project site to be chosen, but may include: soil preparation (spraying, burning, disking, dragging), seed drilling or broadcasting, mowing, prescribed burning, spot spraying, installation of native plants, and removal of invasive plant species. Vendors will complete some of the restoration techniques. Vendor contracts will be awarded on a competitive and performance basis. We will consider contracting with the Minnesota Conservation Corps when appropriate.

Guidelines for project selection will include but will not be limited to: ecological importance of site (based on size, habitat quality, buffering of existing high quality habitat, water quality benefits, & connectivity to other natural areas), matching funds, and partner interest and commitment. Priority will be given to projects on public land and on private land that has been permanently protected through a conservation easement. Prior to the initiation of restoration activities on private land, a landowner agreement will be secured.

Selection of native plants and seeds will follow the LCCMR's guidelines as outlined in the brochure: Native Plant Material-Local vegetation ecotype sequencing. Seed mix selection will be based on the DNR's native plant community field guides.

Ecological management plans will be developed prior to initiation of restoration activities. These management plans contain information regarding existing conditions & issues, goals, activities designed to pursue these goals, preliminary costs associated with the activities, and a timeline.

These restoration and/or enhancement activities will be targeted to: See Exhibit 1 for a list of targeted projects and associated activities.

## Summary Budget Information for Result 2:

5	M.L. 2008	M.L. 2009	Total
Trust Fund Budget:	\$92,000	\$90,000	\$182,000
Amount Spent:	\$92,000	\$3661.60	\$95,661.60
Balance:	\$0	\$86,338.40	\$86,338.40

Deliverable	Completion Date	Budget	Status
1. M.L. 2008-100 acres restored	6/30/2010	\$92,000	Completed
and/or enhanced (partner acres and			
other funding not counted here)			
2. M.L. 2009- 50 acres restored	6/30/2011	\$90,000	In
and/or enhanced (partner acres and other funding not counted here)			progress

Final Completion Date: M.L. 2008 = 6/30/2010; M.L. 2009 = 6/30/2011

Result Status as of 2/1/2009: <u>M.L. 2009</u> N/A

**Result Status as of** 8/1/2009:

#### M.L. 2009

FMR has not begun any restoration projects utilizing M.L. 2009 funding. However, we have identified several projects that we will begin once we have completed phase IV or upon receiving permission to begin phase V before completing phase IV.

#### **Result Status as of** 2/1/2010:

#### <u>M.L. 2009</u>

FMR has not begun any restoration projects utilizing M.L. 2009 funding. However, we have identified several projects that we will begin once we have completed phase IV or upon receiving permission to begin phase V before completing phase IV.

## M.L. 2008 Final Report Summary (June 30, 2010):

FMR conducted the following restoration and/or enhancement activities during the time frame of this grant:

- **Pine Bend Bluffs SNA**. We mowed 2-acres on the installed prairie, and spot sprayed & mowed weeds on 24-acres all within the SNA.
- Katharine Ordway Natural History Study Area. Cut, treated, and chipped buckthorn on 3-acres (2-acre ETF-MeCC funding & 1-acre with leveraged, non-state funds).
- City of Hastings Sand Coulee. Treated buckthorn resprouts and knapweed on 4-acres within the City's portion of the Sand Coulee Prairie. These enhancement activities were conducted utilizing ETF-MeCC funds.
- Hastings Sand Coulee Prairie SNA. Mowed Russian thistle and lawn encroachment on 2 acres of the SNA and treated cypress spurge, spot mowed and sprayed on 15 acres of the SNA. We also conducted a prescribed burn on 14-acres of the SNA. These enhancement activities were conducted utilizing ETF-MeCC funds.
- Hastings WMA. Treated Buckthorn resprouts and cut and treated shrubs on 17-acres of the prairie portion of the WMA. We also conducted a prescribed burn on 13-acres of the WMA. These enhancement activities were conducted using ETF-MeCC funds.
- **Rosemount Wildlife Preserve**. Oversprayed buckthorn resprouts on 18-acres of woodland in the Preserve utilizing ETF -MeCC funds.
- Wilmar Property. Exotic invasive plant control on 12-acres of riparian woodland and broadcasted prairie seed on 28-acres along the Vermillion River (8-acres utilizing ETF-MeCC funds and 32-acres using leveraged funds). This private property is permanently protected by a conservation easement through the Dakota County Farmland and Natural Area Program.
- St. Paul Parks. Installed woodland plants and direct seeded acorns in woodland and installed plant species and mowed installed prairie for a total of

4 acres within Crosby Park (1-acre ETF-MeCC funding & 3-acres with leveraged funds).

- Hastings Riverflats Park. Conducted basal herbicide treatment on buckthorn over a 40-acre area, utilizing LCCMR-MeCC funds.
- Gores Pool Wildlife Management Area and Aquatic Management Area. Cut, treated, and burned exotic invasive woody plants from 67-acres of the WMA/AQA (23-acres utilizing ETF-MeCC funds and 44-acres utilizing leveraged, non-state funds).
- Ravenna Block greenway-Dakota County. Cut and treated exotic invasive woody plants on 12-acres and conducted a prescribed burn on and additional 20 acres. These activities were conducted on two private parcels that are permanently protected by conservation easements through the Dakota County Farmland and Natural Area Program.

In our proposal we committed to working with both public and private landowners to restore and/or enhance 100 acres of significant habitat using EFT-MeCC funding and an additional 25 acres of significant habitat using other funding for a total of 125 acres. During the timeframe of this grant, FMR was able to conduct restoration and enhancement activities on 215-acres using EFT-MeCC funding. Leveraged funds enabled us to conduct restoration and enhancement activities on an additional 80-acres for a total of 295-acres. Furthermore, in our proposal we estimated that we would be able to leverage \$30,000 in non-state funding. We were able to exceed this by leveraging \$36,728 in non-state funding for these habitat restoration/enhancement activities.

There were two sites that we included in our original potential project list that we did not conduct restoration or enhancement activities on. For the St. Croix River site, the property in question was not able to be permanently protected via conservation easement during the timeframe of this grant and therefore FMR chose not to conduct restoration activities on the site using ETF funding. In the second case, we were not able to coordinate with the landowners and put systems in place in order to begin restoration activities.

**Amendment request:** FMR is requesting a budget change that seeks to reallocate \$307.00 from the Other direct operating costs line of the budget to Travel expenses in Minnesota line. In addition, FMR is seeking to reallocate \$1,675 from the Other direct operating costs and \$877.00 from Contracts to the Personnel line. The original amount in the budget in the Other category was for plant material. St. Paul Parks paid for the plant material that was used at Crosby Park. The \$877.00 in the Contracts category was not needed to complete the work.

#### Amendment approval.

## M.L. 2009 Result Status as of 8/1/2010:

During this time period FMR conducted a prescribed burn on 20 acres of prairie on the City of Hastings' property in the Sand Coulee. In addition, we mowed and conducted weed control activities on 13-acres of the Hastings Sand Coulee SNA. Utilizing non-state leveraged funds we mowed 15-acres of prairie at the Pine Bend Bluffs SNA.

**Resut Status as of** 2/1/2011: **Final Report Summary** (June 30, 2011):

#### V. TOTAL TRUST FUND PROJECT BUDGET: <u>M.L. 2008</u> Staff or Contract Services: \$8,000 Equipment: Development: \$ Restoration: \$ 83,700 (for contractor services, plants, seeds, and supplies) Other: travel: \$300 Acquisition, including easements: \$ TOTAL 2008 TRUST FUND PROJECT BUDGET: \$ 92,000

M.L. 2009 Personnel: \$12,420.00 Contracts: \$77,000.00 Equipment/Tools/Supplies: Acquisition, including easements: Travel: \$580.00 Other: TOTAL 2009 TRUST FUND PROJECT BUDGET: \$90,000

# VI. OTHER FUNDS & PARTNERS/ PROJECT STRATEGY: A. Project Partners:

M.L. 2008

Metro Conservation Corridor partners, private landowners, local governments, and regional, state and federal agencies.

M.L. 2009

Metro Conservation Corridor partners, private landowners, local governments, and regional, state and federal agencies.

# B. Other Funds Proposed To Be Spent During The Project Period:

<u>M.L. 2008</u>

We estimate that FMR will leverage approximately \$30,000 in non-state funds from landowners and project funding partners and \$50,000 in other state funding. <u>M.L. 2009</u>

We estimate that FMR will leverage approximately \$70,000 in non-state funds during this phase of the project. FMR will bring \$30,000 in private funds, \$30,000 in federal funds, and \$10,000 from LGUs and/or landowners.

## C. Spending History:

M.L. 2008: Metro Wildlife Corridors I, II & III - \$235,000

M.L. 2009: Metro Wildlife Corridors I, II, III, IV - \$327,000

## D. Time:

M.L. 2008: 2 years. June 10, 2008 - June 30, 2010

M.L. 2009: 2 years. June xx, 2009 - June 30, 2011

## E. Project Impact and Long-term Strategy:

FMR will conduct restoration activities on 100 acres (utilizing M.L. 2008 Metro Wildlife Corridors funding) and 50 acres (utilizing M.L. 2009 Metro Wildlife Corridors funding) of significant habitat. FMR is a placed based conservation organization that focuses its conservation work in the south metro area. Our goal is assist both MeCC and other partners in protecting, restoring, and enhancing important wildlife areas in the Twin Cities Metro Area. We practice retail conservation. That is, we reach out to individual private and public landowners in the designated corridors and engage them in the broader goal of developing a system of interconnected habitat corridors in the Metro area and throughout the state. Because FMR is focused in theTwin Cities we can build strong, long-standing relationships with conservation partners and landowners. Our goal is to stay engaged in all of our projects over the long-term to ensure continuity and that the habitat values are maintained and improved over time.

**VII. DISSEMINATION**: Metro Corridors will periodically distribute information about the program through the widely broadcasted emails to people on the Embrace Open Space (EOS) database, through the EOS quarterly meetings and jointly held county meetings, and on the MeCC website. FMR will also highlight projects on its website, through local media, through its monthly electronic newsletter, and through its periodic print newsletter.

**VIII. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS:** Periodic work program progress reports will be submitted not later than February 1st and August 1<sup>st</sup> each year, starting with February 1, 2009. A final work program report and associated products will be submitted between June 30 and August 1, 2010 for the 2008 appropriation as requested by the LCCMR and a final work program report and associated products for the 2009 appropriation will be submitted no later than August 1, 2011.

Attachment A: Budget Detail for 2009 Projects	-		
<b>Project Title:</b> <i>Metro Conservation Corridors</i> ( <i>MeCC</i> ) <i>Phase V – Restore and Enhance</i> <i>Significant Watershed Habitat (2.3)</i>			
Project Manager Name: Tom Lewanski			
Trust Fund Appropriation: \$ 90,000			
2009 Trust Fund Budget	Result 2 Budget:	Amount Spent (August 1, 2010)	Balance (August 1, 2010)
BUDGET ITEM	Restore & Enhance Significant Habitat:		
<b>PERSONNEL: wages and benefits</b> (List individual names, amount budgeted and %FTE; add rows as needed)			
Conservation Director (2% FTE)	\$2,850.00	\$0.00	\$2,850.00
Ecologist (2) (6% FTE)	\$8,481.00	\$0.00	\$8,481.00
Business Manager (.5% FTE)	\$1,089.00	\$0.00	\$1,089.00
Total Personnel	\$12,420.00	\$0.00	\$12,420.00
Contracts			
<b>Professional/technical.</b> Vendors to provide restoration activities such as burns, soil prep., seeding, woody and exotic plant removal, etc. (Vendor contracts will be awarded on a competitive and performance basis.)	\$77,000	\$3,662	\$73,338.40
Travel expenses in Minnesota	\$580	\$0	\$580.00
COLUMMARE TALKFILE ML2008 VPL_Subd. 3 Land-Habitat	Ba MeCC IV\2.1 Rest <b>\$90,000</b>	Watershed Ha	09-15 FINA <b>\$86,338</b>

#### 2008-2010 LCCMR Projects PROJECT TITLE: MeCC4 Restore and Enhance Significant Watershed Habitat

Friends of the Mississippi River.

