

2009 Project Abstract

For the Period Ending June 30, 2011

TITLE: Metropolitan Conservation Corridors – Phase V – Minnesota Valley Trust, Inc. – 3.3, Expansion of Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge

PROJECT MANAGER: Deborah Loon

ORGANIZATION: Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge Trust, Inc.

ADDRESS: 2312 Seabury Avenue, Minneapolis, MN 55406

WEB SITE ADDRESS: www.mnvalleytrust.org

FUND: Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund

LEGAL CITATION: M.L. 2009, Chp. 143, Sec. 2, Subd. 4f3.3

APPROPRIATION AMOUNT: \$225,000

Overall Project Outcome and Results

The Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge Trust, Inc. acquired 96 acres of priority lands in the Minnesota River Valley floodplain in Sibley County to expand the Jessenland Unit of the Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge. Of the 96 acres acquired, the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund paid for 90 acres and the Minnesota Valley Trust paid for 6 acres with nonprofit / other non-state funds.

Using other non-state funds, the Minnesota Valley Trust also acquired 44.67 acres of priority lands in the Minnesota River Valley in Scott County to expand the Blakely Unit of the Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge. The Blakely and Jessenland Units are on opposite (facing) sides of the Minnesota River and, together, form a large contiguous block of priority wildlife habitat.

Both of these acquisitions expand upon prior acquisitions funded in part by the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund, as recommended by the LCCMR. The parcels acquired are adjacent to other lands protected by the Minnesota Valley Trust for the Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge.

The Blakely and Jessenland Units of the Refuge were identified through a planning process by the US Fish and Wildlife Service as priority expansion units of the Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge. The parcels acquired are within the expansion boundaries of those Refuge units.

After any needed restoration, the lands will be donated to the USFWS for perpetual management as part of the Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge. They will be managed for wildlife and wildlife-dependent recreation, including hunting, fishing, wildlife observation, photography, wildlife interpretation and environmental education.

Project Results Use and Dissemination

The Minnesota Valley Trust will publicize the completion of this project through its website and news releases. All funding partners will be acknowledged on Refuge kiosks, including the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund, as recommended by the Legislative Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources.

Trust Fund 2009 Work Program Final Report

Date of Report: November 1, 2010

Final Report

Date of Work Program Approval: June 16, 2009

Project Completion Date: June 30, 2011

I. PROJECT TITLE: Metropolitan Conservation Corridors – Phase V – Minnesota Valley Trust, Inc. – 3.3, Expansion of Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge

Project Manager: Deborah Loon
Affiliation: Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge Trust, Inc.
Mailing Address: 2312 Seabury Avenue
City / State / Zip: Minneapolis, MN 55406
Telephone Number: 612-801-1935
E-mail Address: DebLoon@comcast.net
FAX Number: 612-728-0700
Web Site Address: www.mnvalleytrust.org

Location: Metro, Central or Southeast (Minnesota River Valley). **County:** Carver, Scott, LeSueur and/or Sibley Counties.

Total Trust Fund Project Budget:	Trust Fund Appropriation	\$	225,000
	Minus Amount Spent:	\$	225,000
	Equal Balance:	\$	0

Legal Citation: M.L. 2009, Chp. 143, Sec. 2, Subd. 4f3.3

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. and III. FINAL PROJECT SUMMARY: The Minnesota Valley Trust acquired 96 acres of priority lands in the Minnesota River Valley floodplain in Sibley County to expand the Jessenland Unit of the Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge. Of the 96 acquired, the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund paid for 90 acres and the Minnesota Valley Trust paid for 6 acres with nonprofit / other non-state funds.

Using other non-state funds, the Minnesota Valley Trust also acquired 44.67 acres of priority lands in the Minnesota River Valley in Scott County to expand the Blakely Unit of the Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge. The Blakely and Jessenland Units are on opposite (facing) sides of the Minnesota River and, together, form a large contiguous block of priority wildlife habitat.

Both of these acquisitions expand upon prior acquisitions funded in part by the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund, as recommended by the LCCMR. The parcels acquired are adjacent to other lands protected by the Minnesota Valley Trust for the Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge.

The Blakely and Jessenland Units of the Refuge were identified through a planning process by the US Fish and Wildlife Service as priority expansion units of the Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge. The parcels acquired are within the expansion boundaries of those Refuge units.

After any needed restoration, the lands will be donated to the US Fish and Wildlife Service for perpetual management as part of the Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge. They will be managed for wildlife and wildlife-dependent recreation, including hunting, fishing, wildlife observation, photography, wildlife interpretation and environmental education.

Appraised value was paid on both parcels:

- 1) \$240,000 on the 96 acres in Sibley County for the Jessenland Unit
- 2) \$129,543 on the 44.67 acres in Scott County for the Blakely Unit

Transaction costs for the acquisitions were paid by with other non-state funds and were as follows:

- 1) \$4,143 on the 96 acres in Sibley County for Jessenland Unit -- \$1,901 legal, \$950 appraisal, \$1,292 closing costs, title insurance, recording fees
- 2) \$1,875.05 on the 44.67 acres in Scott County for Blakely Unit -- \$1,050 appraisal, \$825.05 closing, title insurance, recording fees; legal fees are not recorded at this time

Total cost of the two acquisitions -- \$375,561.05. Funds for the acquisitions came from two sources:

- 1) Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund -- \$225,000
- 2) MN Valley Trust funds -- \$150,561.05

IV. OUTLINE OF PROJECT RESULTS:

Result 1: Fee title acquisition

Description: Fee title acquisition of 45 acres of significant habitat in the Minnesota River Valley within Carver, Scott, LeSueur and/or Sibley Counties. The Minnesota Valley Trust will leverage these grant funds and acquire an additional 45 acres or more with other, non-state funds.

The Trust is working with multiple landowners within expansion units of the Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge, as prioritized and delineated by the USFWS Service in its Comprehensive Conservation Plan.

The prospective lands offer significant habitat for wildlife and opportunities for wildlife-dependent recreation. The lands run along the Minnesota River and include river frontage, floodplain, cropland and bluffs. Some are adjacent to lands already in public ownership (FWS, DNR) or previously acquired by the MN Valley Trust for the Refuge expansion.

These acquisitions will connect the river, floodplain forest and prairie habitat in the Minnesota River bottoms, benefiting many species of wildlife including wood ducks, mallards, bald eagles, grassland nesting birds as well as numerous resident game species such as turkeys and deer.

This project will improve water quality by retiring cropland in the Minnesota River Valley and restoring lands to the natural habitats of floodplain forest, wetlands and prairie. When donated to the USFWS, the public will be given access to the lands for wildlife-dependent recreational activities, such as birding, photography, hiking, interpretation, hunting and fishing.

After acquisition and restoration of the habitat by the Minnesota Valley Trust and other partners, the lands will be donated to the USFWS for management by the Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge.

Summary Budget Information for Result 1: Trust Fund Budget: \$ 225,000
Amount Spent: \$ 225,000
Balance: \$ 0

Deliverable	Completion Date	Budget
1. Acquire 45 acres in fee title with ETF funds and 45 acres in fee title with other non-state funds	June 30, 2011	\$ 225,000

Result Completion Date: November 1, 2010

Final Report Summary: The Minnesota Valley Trust acquired 96 acres of priority lands in the Minnesota River Valley floodplain in Sibley County to expand the Jessenland Unit of the Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge. Of the 96 acquired, the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund paid for 90 acres and the Minnesota Valley Trust paid for 6 acres with nonprofit / other non-state funds.

Using other non-state funds, the Minnesota Valley Trust also acquired 44.67 acres of priority lands in the Minnesota River Valley in Scott County to expand the Blakely Unit of the Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge. The Blakely and Jessenland Units are on opposite (facing) sides of the Minnesota River and, together, form a large contiguous block of priority wildlife habitat.

Both of these acquisitions expand upon prior acquisitions funded in part by the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund, as recommended by the LCCMR. The parcels acquired are adjacent to other lands protected by the Minnesota Valley Trust for the Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge.

The Blakely and Jessenland Units of the Refuge were identified through a planning process by the US Fish and Wildlife Service as priority expansion units of the Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge. The parcels acquired are within the expansion boundaries of those Refuge units.

To achieve these results, the Minnesota Valley Trust did outreach to landowners within the expansion units. After landowners express interest in potentially selling their land, the Trust obtains an appraisal and makes an offer to acquire fee title at the appraised value. The appraisal is shared with the landowner and the landowner is notified that there is no obligation to sell to the Minnesota Valley Trust. After negotiations are complete, a purchase agreement is signed and the due diligence on the title commences.

After any needed restoration on the lands is completed, the lands will be donated to the US Fish and Wildlife Service for perpetual management as part of the Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge. They will be managed for wildlife and wildlife-dependent

recreation, including hunting, fishing, wildlife observation, photography, wildlife interpretation and environmental education.

V. TOTAL TRUST FUND PROJECT BUDGET:

Personnel: \$ 0

Contracts: \$ 0

Equipment/Tools/Supplies: \$ 0

Acquisition, including easements: \$ 225,000

Travel: \$ 0

Other: \$ 0

TOTAL TRUST FUND PROJECT BUDGET: \$ 225,000

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

VI. PROJECT STRATEGY:

A. Project Partners: US Fish & Wildlife Service, Friends of the Minnesota Valley, local units of government and others.

B. Project Impact and Long-term Strategy: This project is part of a long-term strategy to expand the Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge by up to 10,000 acres. The expansion strategy was developed by the US Fish and Wildlife Service in its Comprehensive Conservation Plan for the Refuge, completed September 2004 after a thorough public input process.

This project will further acquisition work completed previously by the Minnesota Valley Trust with support from the ENRTF. The benefits of the project include the following:

- Connect the river, floodplain forest and prairie habitat in the Minnesota River bottoms, benefiting many species of wildlife including wood ducks, mallards, bald eagles, grassland nesting birds as well as numerous resident game species such as turkeys and deer.
- Improve water quality of the Minnesota River by retiring cropland and restoring lands to the natural habitats of floodplain forest, wetlands and prairie.
- Establish new lands for the public's enjoyment through the wildlife-dependent recreational activities of birding, photography, hiking, interpretation, hunting and fishing.

C. Other Funds Proposed to be Spent during the Project Period: \$225,000

D. Spending History:

MeCC Phase I (2003) - \$290,000 ETF and \$1,137,030 other non-state funds

MeCC Phase II (2005) - \$230,000 ETF and \$428,000 other non-state funds

MeCC Phase III (2007) - \$210,000 ETF and \$376,473 other non-state funds

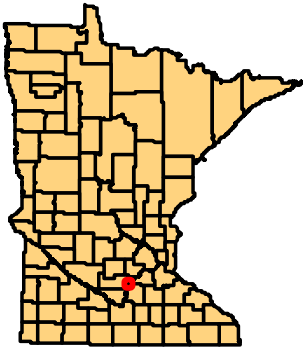
MeCC Phase IV (2008) - \$225,000 ETF and \$197,985.20 other non-state funds

VII. DISSEMINATION: As projects are completed, the Minnesota Valley Trust will announce the accomplishments through press releases, the Trust website and the Metro Conservation Corridors website.

VIII. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS: Periodic work program progress reports will be submitted not later than February 1 and August 1. A final work program report and associated products will be submitted between June 30 and August 1, 2011 as requested by the LCCMR.

IX. RESEARCH PROJECTS: NA

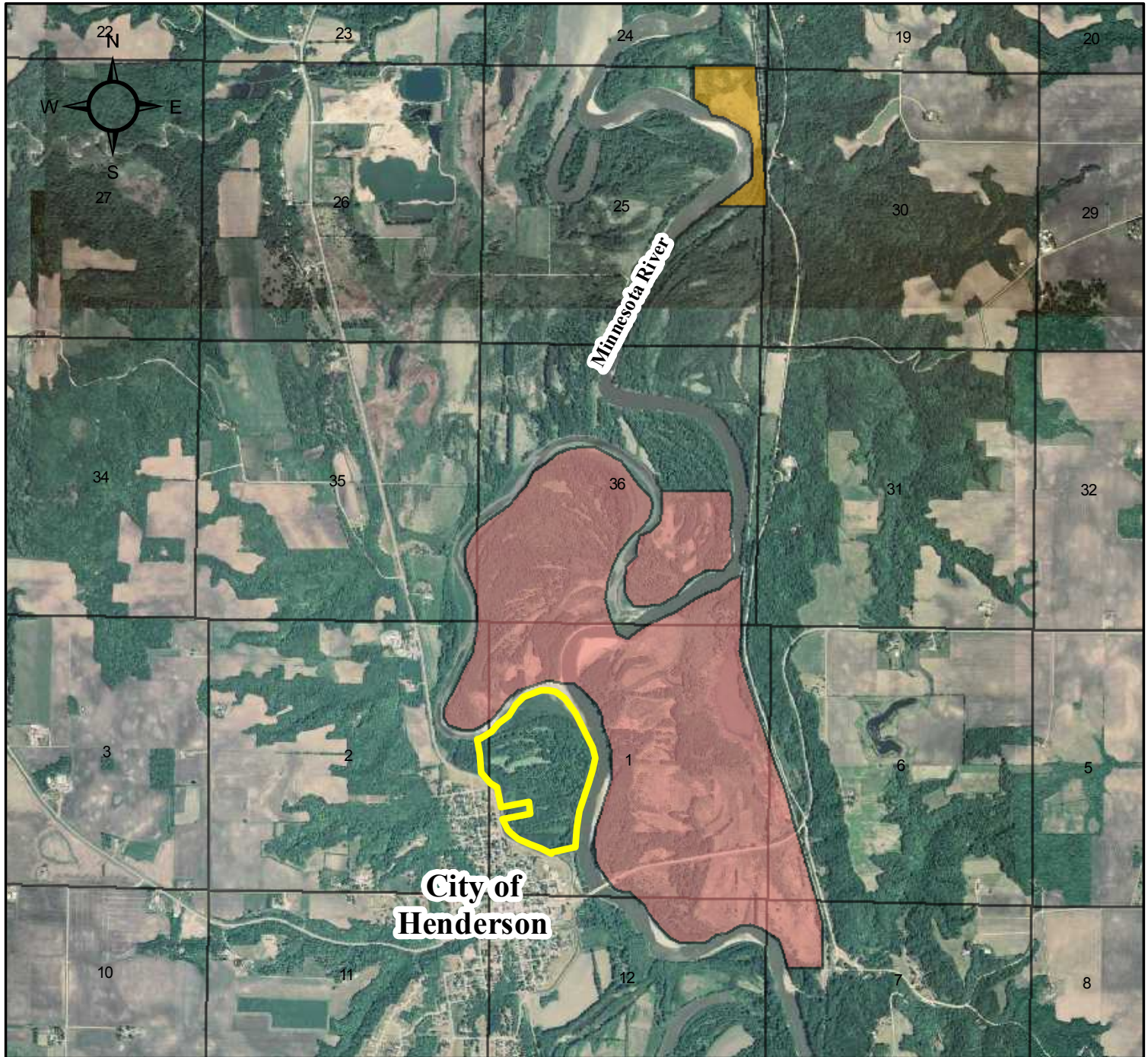
Attachment A: Budget Detail for 2009 Projects						
Project Title: Metropolitan Conservation Corridors – Phase V – Minnesota Valley Trust, Inc. – 3.3, Expansion of Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge						
Project Manager Name: Deborah Loon						
Trust Fund Appropriation: \$225,000						
2009 Trust Fund Budget	<u>Result 1 Budget:</u>	Amount Spent <i>(date)</i>	Balance 11/1/2010	TOTAL BUDGET	TOTAL BALANCE	
	Fee title acquisition of 45 acres					
BUDGET ITEM						
Land acquisition	225,000	225,000	0	225,000	0	
COLUMN TOTAL	\$225,000	\$225,000	\$0	\$225,000	\$0	







Minnesota Valley Trust, Inc. - MeCC 3.3 2009

T112N, R26W, S1

0 0.5 1 Miles



-  2009 ENRTF - Grant Funds Acquisition - 96 Acres
-  MN Valley Trust - Acquired
-  2009 ENRTF - Match Funds Acquisition - 45 Acres
-  Section Boundary

