

Trust Fund 2009 Work Program

Date of Report: May 7, 2009

Date of Next Progress Report: December 1, 2009

Date of Work Program Approval: TBA

Project Completion Date: June 30, 2011

I. PROJECT TITLE: Partners for Fish and Wildlife (2b)
Minnesota's Habitat Conservation Partnership

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Location: All Partners for Fish and Wildlife project work will be completed within seven of the nine Habitat Conservation Partnership Project Area boundaries identified in the attached map (please see the 1a Project Area Coordination and Mapping work plan). The Partners for Fish and Wildlife program will not be working in Project Areas #5 or #11 under this Work Program.

Total Trust Fund Project Budget:	Trust Fund Appropriation	\$	50,000
	Minus Amount Spent:	\$	0
	Equal Balance:	\$	50,000

Legal Citation: M.L. 2009, Chp. 143, Sec. 2, Subd. 4(e)2b

Appropriation Language:

\$3,375,000 is from the trust fund to the commissioner of natural resources for the sixth appropriation for acceleration of agency programs and cooperative agreements. Of this appropriation, \$770,000 is for the Department of Natural Resources agency programs and \$2,605,000 is for agreements as follows: \$450,000 with Pheasants Forever; \$50,000 with Minnesota Deer Hunters Association; \$895,000 with Ducks Unlimited, Inc.; \$85,000 with National Wild Turkey Federation; \$365,000 with the Nature Conservancy; \$210,000 with Minnesota Land Trust; \$350,000 with the Trust for Public Land; \$100,000 with Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge Trust, Inc.; \$50,000 with the United States Fish and Wildlife Service; and \$50,000 with Friends of Detroit Lakes Watershed Management District to plan, restore, and acquire fragmented landscape corridors that connect areas of quality habitat to sustain fish, wildlife, and plants. The United States Department of Agriculture-Natural Resources Conservation Service is a cooperating partner in the appropriation. Expenditures are limited to the project corridor areas as defined in the work program. Land acquired with this appropriation must be sufficiently improved to

meet at least minimum habitat and facility management standards as determined by the commissioner of natural resources. 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: The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Partners for Fish and Wildlife (PFW) Program will provide technical and financial assistance for willing Minnesota landowners to complete agreed upon wetland and upland restoration or enhancement projects. The PFW Program provides the opportunity to work with individual private landowners and other entities to complete habitat restoration projects on lands that often are not eligible for other conservation programs such as those offered by USDA. It also provides the opportunity to work with other members of the Habitat Conservation Partnership or other partners that have acquired easements or fee title property where USFWS personnel provide the technical and financial assistance to complete habitat restoration projects on those tracts acquired and protected in perpetuity. Priority for funding will be given to those project sites purchased in fee title by partnering agencies and organizations and properties protected by perpetual or long-term easements. All habitats restored or enhanced will be protected for no less than 10 years through agreements between the USFWS and the respective landowners. Restored wetland sites will provide increased wildlife habitat, flood attenuation, ground water recharge, pollutant trapping, and scenic and recreational benefits. Restored native prairie sites will provide increased grassland nesting cover for birds, winter cover for resident wildlife, and improve water quality by reducing soil erosion. Native prairie remnants will be enhanced by removing invasive species. Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund (ETF) funding in the amount of \$50,000 will be used to accelerate the USFWS existing PFW Program which will match the \$50,000, through voluntary restoration of an estimated total of 80 acres of wetland habitat on private lands within seven of the nine Project Areas. An estimated total of 140 acres of upland/native prairie restoration or enhancement projects within the seven Project Areas will also be funded.

The \$50,000 of ETF funds will be expended by transfer to a dedicated USFWS grant fund account for payment of expenditures on completed projects as they occur.

III. PROGRESS SUMMARY AS OF: All Habitat Conservation Partnership progress summaries (twice annually) will be generated by the Partnership online reporting system. This system provides an accomplishment, expenditure and narrative update to LCCMR for each individual work plan.

IV. OUTLINE OF PROJECT RESULTS: USFWS staff will provide technical and financial assistance to Habitat Conservation Partnership (HCP) members, other partners and /or private landowners to restore or enhance 40 acres of wetland and 70 acres of upland prairie habitat in the HCP Project Areas. Wetlands are restored or enhanced through the: construction of drainage ditch plugs; embankment or berm construction; disrupting sub-surface drain-tile systems; removal of excess sediment; and installation of water control structures and fish barriers. Upland prairie habitat is restored or enhanced by: reseeding native prairie onto former tilled cropland; inter-seeding into degraded pastures or other grasslands; and removal of invasive species on prairie remnants and seeded prairie grasslands. Individual project plans will be prepared which address project site conditions, restoration or enhancement timeline, and long-term maintenance and monitoring requirements. ETF Grant and Other funds will be used to hire contractors and purchase needed supplies and materials to complete the restoration projects. The “other funds” provided by the USFWS at a minimum 1:1 match on this proposal are dollars devoted to on-the-ground accomplishments of wetland and grassland restoration or enhancement projects. With the USFWS “other funds” contribution an additional 40 acres of wetland and 70 acres of upland will be restored. The USFWS does not account for the salary and infrastructure of its field staff performing the work to complete these projects which would be at least equal to the amount of grant funds and other funds expended. Several projects may also bring in contributions of additional “other” funds from landowners or other non-HCP partners to complete quality wildlife habitat as project plans are finalized.

Expenditure of ETF funds is proposed as follows: The \$50,000 ETF funds for this work program (2b) Phase V will be spent on wetland and upland restoration or enhancement projects within seven of the nine Phase V HCP Project Areas. Please see Appendix B for a list of potential projects.

Result 1: Development – Habitat Restoration Accomplishments reported by Project Area and Reporting Period, listed below.

Project Area #1 (Aspen Parkland); Project Area #2 (Mississippi Headwaters); Project Area #3-7-8 (Prairie Forest Transition Zone); Project Area #4 (Central Lakes); Project Area #6 (Upper Minnesota River); Project Area #9 (Des Moines River Valley); Project Area #10 (Southern Lakes);

Description: USFWS biologists will conduct feasibility determinations, design, and provide construction oversight to complete restoration or enhancement of 40 acres of wetland and 70 acres of upland habitat acres using allocated ETF dollars,

accomplished through the Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program, within all or some of seven of the HCP Project Areas.

Summary Budget Information for Result 1: Trust Fund Budget: \$ 50,000
 Amount Spent: \$ 0
 Balance: \$ 50,000

Deliverable	Completion Date	Budget
1. Restore or enhance 40 acres of wetland		\$30,000
2. Restore or enhance 70 acres of upland		\$20,000

Result Completion Date: June 30, 2011

Result Status as of All Habitat Conservation Partnership progress summaries will be generated by the Partnership online reporting system. This system provides an accomplishment, expenditure and narrative update to LCCMR for each individual work plan. All projects will be completed and funds expended by June 30, 2011.

Final Report Summary: The final report will be generated by the Partnership online reporting system and will include the project abstract, and detailed accounting of expenditures and accomplishments for individual work plans.

V. TOTAL TRUST FUND PROJECT BUDGET:

Personnel: \$0

Contracts: \$ 50,000 (110 acres) ETF funds will be used to: hire contractors to perform wetland restoration construction work, perform seedbed preparation and/or seeding on upland grassland restorations, or conduct invasive species removal; purchase water control structure materials for wetland restorations if needed; purchase local genotype prairie seed and herbicides if needed for prairie restoration projects.

Equipment/Tools/Supplies: \$0

Acquisition, including easements: \$0

Travel: \$0

Other: \$0

TOTAL TRUST FUND PROJECT BUDGET: \$

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

VI. PROJECT STRATEGY:

A. Project Partners: Through its Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program, the USFWS will continue to work with other federal and state agencies, local units of government, tribal entities, conservation organizations, and individual landowners to

restore fish and wildlife habitats on private lands in Minnesota. Phase VI efforts will be coordinated with other involved HCP partners

B. Project Impact and Long-term Strategy: Restored or enhanced wetland sites will provide increased wildlife habitat, flood attenuation, ground water recharge, pollutant trapping, and scenic and recreational benefits. Restored prairie grassland sites will provide increased nesting cover for several species of grassland dependant birds whose populations are in steep decline; winter cover for resident wildlife; and improve water quality by reducing soil erosion. Native prairie remnants will be enhanced by removing invasive plant species.

Restoring and enhancing wildlife habitat on private land has long been recognized as a primary tool to maintain and/or increase wildlife populations. Private land habitat projects will be focused in established priority areas and to compliment existing and future public owned conservation lands.

C. Other Funds Proposed to be Spent during the Project Period: The USFWS has committed \$50,000.00 in matching funds to support this overall project. This funding is estimated to complete 40 acres of wetland and 70 acres of upland restoration or enhancement. In addition, the USFWS will provide technical assistance to assist landowners to voluntarily restore wetland and upland habitat on their lands.

D. Spending History: : Since 1987, the USFWS' Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program in Minnesota has restored more than 15,500 drained wetlands (66,000 acres) and restored or enhanced more than 1000 upland sites (35,000 acres) to native grasses and forbs. Since fiscal year 1999, the USFWS has expended in excess of \$1.2 million annually to deliver the Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program in Minnesota; such expenditures are represented by technical assistance (personnel, administrative support) and habitat restoration (project construction) funding.

During the CH01 - Phase I work program (2b), between July 24, 2001 and May 4, 2004, \$69,996.20 of ETF money was spent within Project Areas 3, 7, 8 and 10 to restore 317 wetland acres (56 wetland sites) on 25 private properties. The USFWS also expended \$119,854.64 of USFWS other funds (match) to restore 389.2 wetland acres (129 wetland sites) on 28 private properties within HCP Project Areas 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 9 and 10. The USFWS has also provided approximately \$100,000 of in-kind service to provide technical assistance to private landowners to deliver the Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program within these Project Areas.

During the (A-1)13 Phase II work program (2b), from July 9, 2003 through November 8, 2004, \$29,955.37 ETF funding was spent within 3 of the HCP Project Areas to restore 102.7 wetland acres, 15.0 native prairie upland acres, and 200 linear feet of riparian stream-bank habitat. The USFWS also expended \$92,675.08 of USFWS other funds (match) to restore 938 wetland acres, 509 native prairie upland acres and 500 feet of riparian stream-bank habitat within HCP Project Areas 1, 3, 6, 7, 8 and 9. The USFWS has also provided approximately \$100,000 of in-kind service to

provide technical assistance to private landowners to deliver the Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program within these Project Areas.

During the 5(a) Phase III work program (2b), from July 1, 2006 through July 30, 2007, \$50,000 of ETF funding was spent within six of the HCP project areas to restore 295.1 acres of wetlands. The USFWS also expended \$54,870.83 of other funds (match) to restore or enhance 576 acres of uplands and 4 acres of wetlands in four HCP project areas. The USFWS has also provided approximately \$50,000 of in-kind service to provide technical assistance to private landowners to deliver the Partners for Fish and Wildlife program within these Project Areas.

ETF funding for the 4(b) 2b Partners for Fish and Wildlife – Minnesota’s Habitat Conservation Partnership Phase VI - 2007 in the amount of \$30,000 has been recently expended and the final report is in progress to be completed by June 30, 2009.

ETF funding for the 3(c) 2b Partners for Fish and Wildlife – Minnesota’s Habitat Conservation Partnership Phase V – 2008 in the amount of \$30,000 is currently in progress with all funding obligated to specific projects and is scheduled to be completed prior to June 30, 2010.

VII. DISSEMINATION: Accomplishment Reports and press releases will be made available at <http://www.mnhabitatcorridors.org>

VIII. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS:

Periodic work program progress reports will be submitted not later than; December 1, 2009; June 1, 2010; December 1, 2010, 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: N/A

Potential Project List*

Habitat Conservation Partnership

Appendix B

June 1, 2009

Partners for Fish and Wildlife - Phase VI - 2b

Project Name (no landowner names)	Type of work	Estimated Acres	Estimated Total Cost	County	Project Area
Projected Projects					
<i>D/PFW-08-02</i>	<i>Restoration wetlan</i>	9	10,000	<i>Lyon</i>	9
<i>L/B/PFW-09-01</i>	<i>Restoration wetlan</i>	57	20,000	<i>Lyon</i>	9
<i>Jay Lake</i>	<i>Restoration wetlan</i>	14	5,000	<i>Becker</i>	3
<i>KS - 32710 - 2008</i>	<i>Enhancement</i>	40	20,000	<i>Lac Qui P</i>	8
<i>Brazil</i>	<i>Restoration wetlan</i>	80	20,000	<i>Rice</i>	10
<i>Lincoln Trust</i>	<i>Restoration wetlan</i>	40	30,000	<i>Blue Earth</i>	10

*Please note that these are potential projects & just because a project is listed, does not mean it will be completed.

All projects are done on private lands in cooperation with willing private landowners or on public easement or fee title land:

