

Trust Fund 2009 Work Program

Date of Report: May 6, 2009

Date of Next Progress Report: December 1, 2010

Date of Work Program Approval: TBD

Project Completion Date: June 30, 2010

I. PROJECT TITLE: 2K – Prairie Management, MN DNR
Minnesota’s Habitat Conservation Partnership Phase VI
www.mnhabitatcorridors.org

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Location: Areas of native prairie and associated grasslands on public and private land within Project Areas 1, 3, 6, 9, 10, & 11. See map of Scientific & Natural Areas and Native Prairie Bank easements in the project areas.

Total Trust Fund Project Budget:	Trust Fund Appropriation	\$	75,000
	Minus Amount Spent:	\$	0
	Equal Balance:	\$	75,000

Legal Citation: M.L. 2009, Chp. 143, Sec. 2, Subd. 4e2k

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:

This project will accelerate the initiative to tackle the 'backlog' of prairie and grassland management needs in priority prairie landscapes, such as woody encroachment removal, prescribed burning, exotic species control, and prairie reconstruction. It targets areas of native prairie and grassland on public and private land within Project Areas 1, 3, 6, 9, 10, & 11. Focus will be placed on the highest quality prairies identified by the MN County Biological Survey program. Habitat management activities will be implemented through contracts and cost-effective use of existing seasonal staff and crews experienced and equipped in prairie management. When possible, landowners will be engaged as the labor force to implement management practices on their lands. There will be a minimum of 500 acres of native prairie and adjacent grasslands benefited from this project. Roughly half of these acres will be private lands, such as those enrolled in the Native Prairie Bank Program.

III. PROGRESS SUMMARY AS OF

IV. OUTLINE OF PROJECT RESULTS:

Result 1: Prairie Management and Restoration

Description:

The following prairie management and restoration activities will be targeted at Scientific and Natural Areas and Native Prairie Bank conservation easements as shown on the attached map.

Woody encroachment – (\$29,000/up to 200 acres of surrounding grassland/prairie benefited). Invasive woody species have invaded a significant number of native prairie tracts over the past 60+ years and is accelerating. Cutting scattered trees, fencerows, or small groves in prairies and grasslands can substantially improve areas

of habitat for open grassland flora and fauna. Woody encroachment removal projects will be implemented by private contractors and DNR management crews.

Prescribed burning – (\$24,000/up to 250 acres burned). The importance of fire for keeping prairies healthy is widely recognized. However, limited spring and fall burn seasons, and the need for specialized training and equipment, make it challenging to meet all fire management needs. This activity builds on the success of past LCCMR accelerated prairie burning projects. DNR trained burn crews will implement prescribed fire projects, or certified private contractors when available.

Invasive species control – (\$12,000/up to 35 acres treated) Herbaceous invasive species threaten many of the few remaining native prairies, and new invasive species continue to emerge. Species such as Spotted Knapweed, Birdsfoot Trefoil, Leafy Spurge, and Crown Vetch quickly invade grassland, reducing diversity and habitat quality. Funds will be used to implement 'best management practices' for control and elimination of exotic species on remnant prairies and other priority grasslands.

Restoration/reconstruction – (\$10,000/up to 15 acres reconstructed) Today prairie remnants and other grasslands existing as fragments. Reconstruction efforts are needed to expand functionality of existing habitat, and buffer native plant communities from surrounding activities. Funds will be used to harvest and process seed, and plant native prairie species. Restoration projects will use only local ecotype seeds and plants.

Summary Budget Information for Result 1:	Trust Fund Budget:	\$ 75,000
	Amount Spent:	\$ 0
	Balance:	\$ 75,000

Deliverable	Completion Date	Budget
1. 200 acres of woody encroachment control	June 30, 2010	\$29,000
2. 250 acres prescribed burning	June 30, 2010	\$24,000
3. 35 acres of invasive species control	June 30, 2010	\$12,000
4. 15 acres of restoration/reconstruction	June 30, 2010	\$10,000

Result Completion Date:

Result Status as of (December 1, 2010):

Result Status as of (June 30, 2010):

Final Report Summary:

V. TOTAL TRUST FUND PROJECT BUDGET:

<u>Budget Item</u>	
*Personnel: DNR staff: NR Specialists, NR Technicians, NR laborers	\$37,500
Contracts: Competitive bid contracts with private vendors and cost-share grants to landowners for prescribed burning, prairie reconstructions, woody encroachment, etc	\$26,500
Equipment/Tools/Supplies: project supplies, vehicle fleet costs (e.g. ATV, Pick-up, ASV tracked vehicle)	\$11,000
Acquisition: none	\$0
Travel: none	\$0
Other: none	\$0
TOTAL TRUST FUND PROJECT BUDGET:	\$75,000

***Explanation of Personnel costs:**

- For classified and unclassified SNA program & other DNR staff paid almost exclusively with special project funds: up to ~ 0.4 FTE specialists and technicians; and ~ 0.3 FTE laborers and seasonal crews
- Only time spent on approved projects will be charged to these funds. Without these funds, none of the projects in this work program would be completed. They are an acceleration of related initiatives.
- To implement projects in the work program, specialized skills (prescribed burning, knowledge of sites and management implications) are often required. DNR employees with the training, experience and certifications required to do these specialized tasks are used to directly implement these projects, and work with landowners and contractors to design, direct and certify completion of projects they carry out.
- Contracts with outside vendors are used when possible, but contractors are not available for some projects.

TOTAL TRUST FUND PROJECT BUDGET: \$ 75,000

Explanation of Capital Expenditures Greater Than \$3,500: none

VI. PROJECT STRATEGY:

A. Project Partners: We are part of the Habitat Conservation Partnership Phase V proposal. Please see main proposal for complete partner list.

B. Project Impact and Long-term Strategy: Please see main proposal for Habitat Conservation Partnerships impacts and long-term strategy. Project impact and long-term strategy for Prairie Management will be included in the December 1, 2009 Work Program Progress Report.

C. Other Funds Proposed to be Spent during the Project Period:

D. Spending History: Past HCP spending; 2001: \$36,250 / 2003: \$0 / 2005: \$133,000 / 2007: \$75,000

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

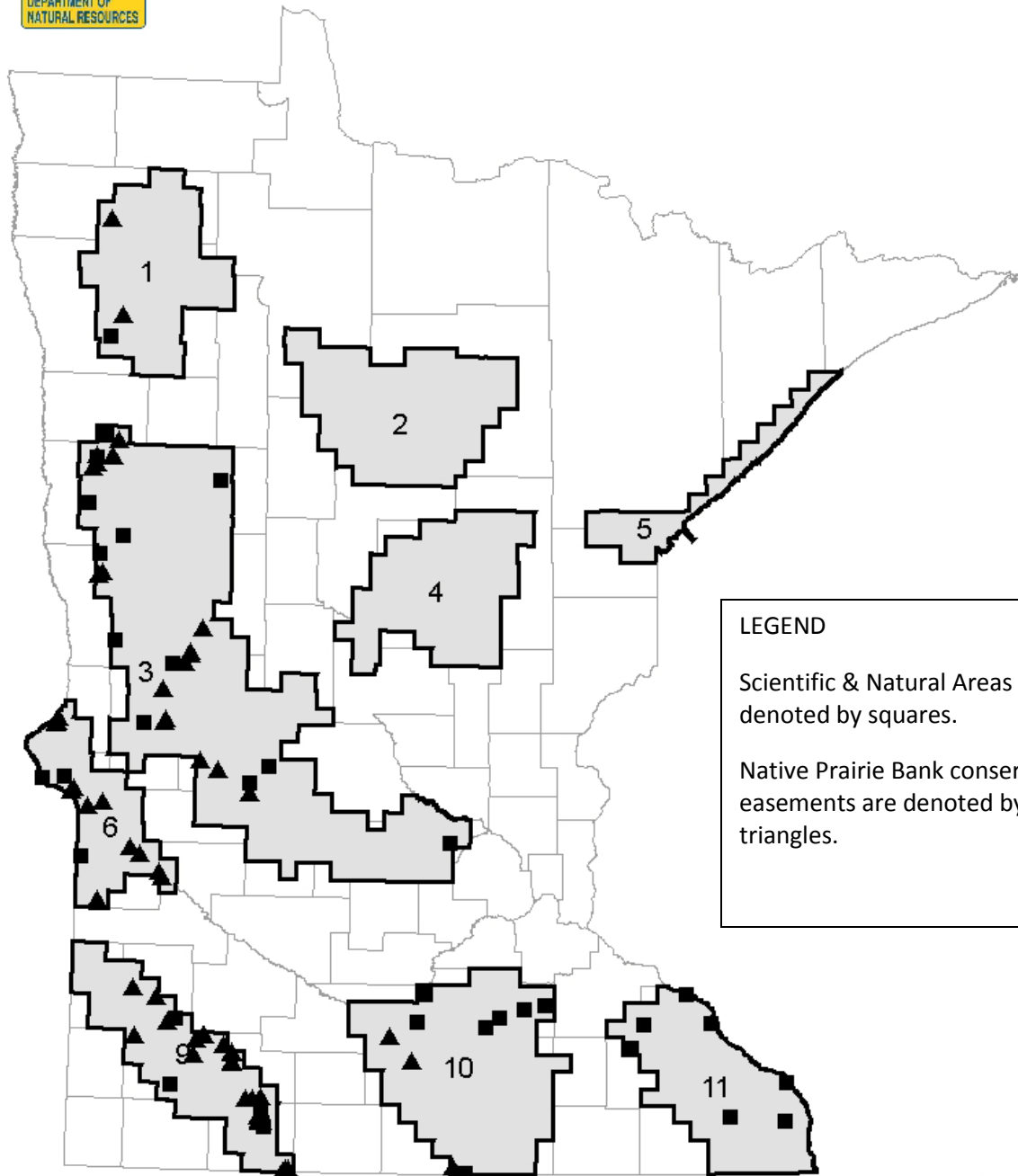
VIII. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS:

Periodic progress reports are due December 1, 2009, June 1, 2010, and December 1, 2010 and the final work program report is due between June 30 and August 1, 2011. All reports will be generated using the HCP online reporting system.

IX. RESEARCH PROJECTS: NA

Attachment A: Budget Detail for 2009 Projects - Summary and a Budget page for each partner (if applicable)					
Project Title: 2K – Prairie Management					
Project Manager Name: Jason Garms					
Trust Fund Appropriation: \$75,000					
2009 Trust Fund Budget	Result 1 Budget:	Amount Spent <i>(date)</i>	Balance <i>(date)</i>	TOTAL BUDGET	TOTAL BALANCE
	<i>Prairie Management and restoration</i>				
BUDGET ITEM					
PERSONNEL: wages and benefits DNR NR Specialists, NR Technicians, NR laborers	37,500				37,500
Contracts					
Professional/technical					
Other contracts: (contracts for prescribed burning, prairie reconstructions, woody encroachment, etc. Also includes cost-share agreements for private land projects)	26,500				26,500
Other direct operating costs: vehicle fleet costs (e.g. ATV, Pick-up, ASV tracked vehicle)	7,500				7,500
Supplies: herbicide, safety supplies, etc	3,500				3,500
COLUMN TOTAL	\$75,000	\$0	\$75,000	\$0	\$75,000

Scientific & Natural Areas and Native Prairie Banks in the Habitat Conservation Partnership focus areas 1, 3, 6, 9, 10, 11



May 7, 2009

