

Trust Fund 2009 Work Program

Date of Report: May 28, 2009
Date of Next Status Report: December 1, 2009
Date of Work program Approval:
Project Completion Date: June 30, 2011

I. PROJECT TITLE: Wetlands Reserve Program (Part 3d)
Minnesota's Habitat Conservation Partnership Phase 6

Project Manager: Jon Schneider, Manager – MN Conservation Programs
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Project Co-Manager: Tim Koehler – Assistant State Conservationist
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Location: All Wetland Reserve Program work will be completed within the nine HCP Project Area boundaries identified in the attached map.

Total Trust Fund Project Budget:	Trust Fund Appropriation:	\$	420,000
	Minus Amount Spent:	\$	- 0 -
	Equal Balance:	\$	420,000

Legal Citation: ML 2009, Chap. 143, Sec. 2, Subd. 4e3d

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:

DU will provide technical assistance (TA) to the federal Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP) administered by the USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) through contracted field technicians to help secure new WRP easements. This state-funded TA will make it possible for USDA-NRCS to perpetually protect 1,000 acres and restore 2,000 acres of wetlands, shallow lakes and associated upland wildlife habitat in prairie Habitat Conservation Partnership (HCP) project areas at an estimated cost of \$1,500,000 to NRCS. These restored wetlands and native prairie grasslands will significantly improve existing blocks of habitat and will improve downstream water quality. Grant funds will be used by DU to contract with wetland restoration technicians, provide supplemental contract or DU staff engineering services to USDA-NRCS, and for DU staff costs to administer this grant partnership (hire and supervise the contract techs).

III. PROGRESS SUMMARY: 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:

Result 1: Secure WRP Easements (Part 3d)

Description:

DU will use ETF funding to contract with wetland restoration technicians in HCP Project Areas to provide technical assistance (TA) to the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and private landowners to help USDA-NRCS protect or restore 3,000 acres of land in Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP) easements in HCP habitat conservation project areas. WRP promotion will target large restorable wetlands and

drained shallow lakes. The contract technicians will help landowners apply for the WRP via federal applications, and help guide the planning and restoration of lands accepted into the WRP through the development of federal conservation plan contracts between landowners and USDA-NRCS according to USDA-NRCS guidelines and specifications. TA activities will include landowner contacts, USDA-NRCS WRP applications submitted, USDA-NRCS WRP restoration plan developed, USDA-NRCS WRP wetland restoration designs developed, and USDA-NRCS WRP restoration project implementation oversight, all of which are performed to meet USDA-NRCS requirements as per the WRP guidelines and are critical to helping USDA-NRCS secure additional easements and maintain continued federal funding for the WRP in Minnesota into the future. The USDA-NRCS will fund the associated easement and restoration costs. The contract technicians will implement all aspects of the WRP program that will result in lands being enrolled and wetlands and uplands restored under the federal WRP in HCP Project Areas. DU will coordinate the partnership and administer wetland restoration tech contracts, including payments of salary, travel, and field expenses with grant funds and grant administration and coordination. USDA-NRCS will pay for all WRP easements and restoration work with federal funds, and all restoration work will be performed to USDA-NRCS standards, guidelines, and specifications.

POTENTIAL LCCMR PHASE VI PROTECTED WRP EASEMENTS

Project number	Type of work	Acres	Estimated Total cost	County Name	Project Area
66-08-0200	Easement	130.10	\$176,727.86	Becker	LCCMR 3-7-8
66-08-0165	Easement	63.00	\$95,638.38	Clay	LCCMR 3-7-8
66-08-0167	Easement	75.00	\$91,824.80	Clay	LCCMR 3-7-8
66-08-0214	Easement	69.40	\$98,146.25	Douglas	LCCMR 3-7-8
66-08-0124	Easement	63.90	\$144,882.15	Douglas	LCCMR 3-7-8
66-08-0059	Easement	21.40	\$62,105.37	Freeborn	LCCMR 10
66-08-0015	Easement	129.00	\$366,104.54	Freeborn	LCCMR 10
66-08-0087	Easement	35.80	\$86,985.48	Kandiyohi	LCCMR 3-7-8
660900NBF	Easement	52.20	\$91,064.62	Kandiyohi	LCCMR 3-7-8
66-08-0196	Easement	121.00	\$226,653.30	Lincoln	LCCMR 9
66-08-0183	Easement	0.90	\$3,697.55	Pope	LCCMR 3-7-8
66-08-0186	Easement	273.00	\$507,957.93	Pope	LCCMR 3-7-8
66-08-0184	Easement	1.30	\$4,084.61	Pope	LCCMR 3-7-8
66-08-0187	Easement	1.80	\$4,916.07	Pope	LCCMR 3-7-8
66-08-0185	Easement	54.10	\$86,013.90	Pope	LCCMR 3-7-8
66-08-0135	Easement	157.70	\$333,505.48	Stevens	LCCMR 3-7-8
66-08-0134	Easement	76.50	\$163,081.38	Stevens	LCCMR 3-7-8
66-08-0266	Easement	79.30	\$128,268.19	Todd	LCCMR 3-7-8
66-08-0148	Easement	70.50	\$215,356.07	Waseca	LCCMR 10

19 TOTALS 1475.90 \$2,887,013.93

*Please note that these are potential private land projects, all of which may not necessarily be completed. All projects are done on either public lands or in cooperation with willing private landowners. Projects not on this list that meet the strategic objectives of the Partnership may be added at any time via submittal of a project list amendment.

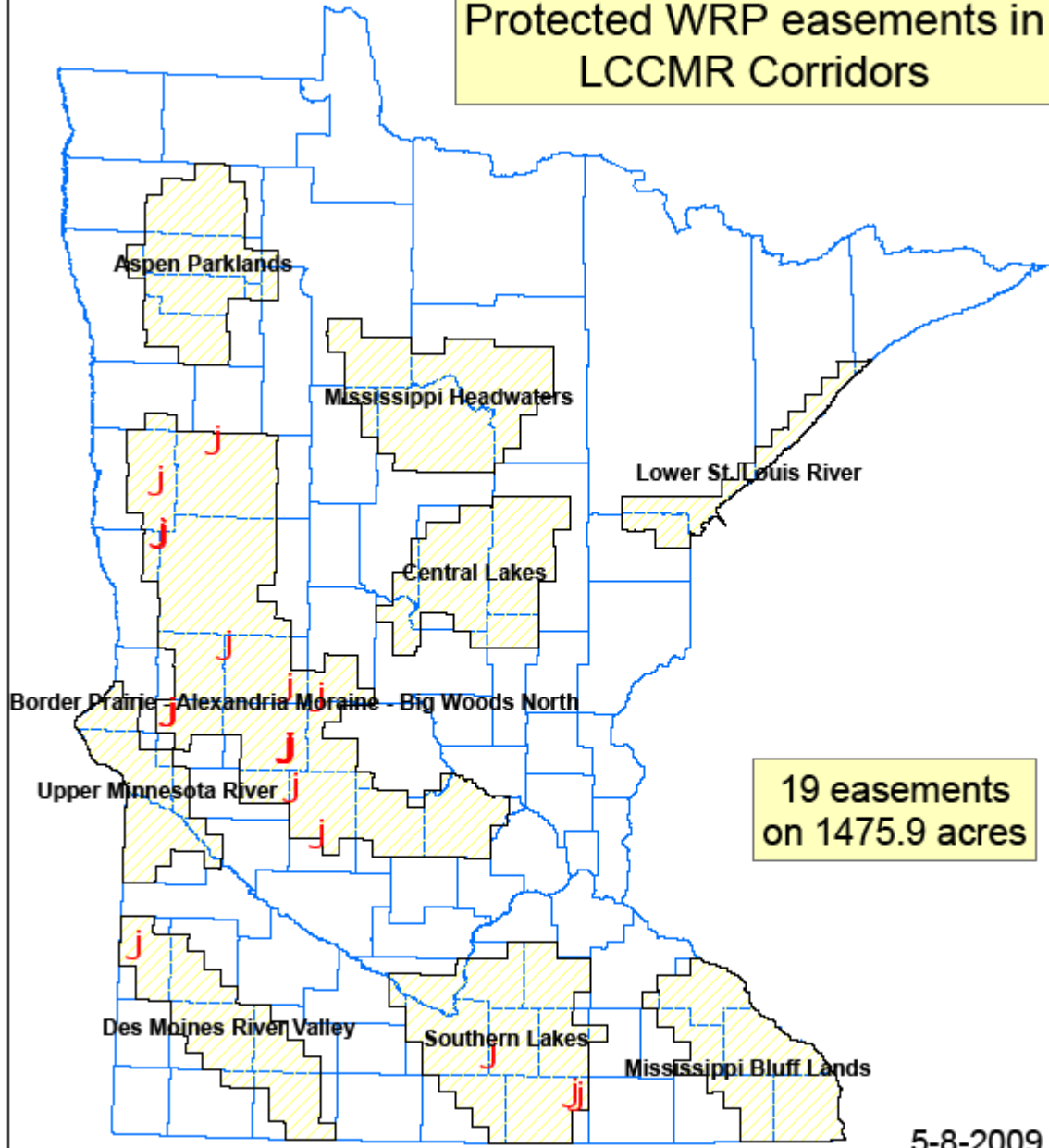
The projects listed above are from WRP applications previously received and approved by NRCS, and may be close prior to this grant period. Additional new WRP applications will be secured and added to this list once work begins, and throughout the grant period.

POTENTIAL LCCMR PHASE VI RESTORATIONS ON WRP EASEMENTS

Project number	Type of work	Acres	Estimated restoration cost	County Name	Project area
66632266008	Restoration	19.10	\$18,477.00	Becker	LCMR 3
66632270037	Restoration	183.30	\$73,320.00	Becker	LCMR 3
66632270077	Restoration	1.50	\$600.00	Becker	LCMR 3
66632266059	Restoration	78.40	\$65,205.00	Big Stone	LCMR 6
66632250019	Restoration	158.30	\$70,714.00	Clay	LCMR 3
66632266005	Restoration	76.80	\$30,720.00	Clay	LCMR 3
66632266068	Restoration	145.70	\$115,500.00	Clay	LCMR 3
66632270075	Restoration	216.30	\$86,520.00	Clay	LCMR 3
66632266054	Restoration	91.50	\$46,380.00	Freeborn	LCMR 10
66632266055	Restoration	70.11	\$28,200.00	Freeborn	LCMR 10
66632266058	Restoration	547.30	\$974,480.00	Freeborn	LCMR 10
66632266064	Restoration	145.70	\$103,950.00	Pope	LCMR 7
66-08-0006	Restoration	150.20	\$60,080.00	Pope	LCCMR 3-7-8
66632270076	Restoration	69.70	\$27,880.00	Rice	LCMR 10
66632250055	Restoration	119.16	\$62,000.00	Steele	LCMR 10
66632266042	Restoration	100.50	\$100,200.00	Steele	LCMR 10
66632266035	Restoration	135.90	\$54,360.00	Stevens	LCMR 3
66632266036	Restoration	97.00	\$38,800.00	Stevens	LCMR 3
18	TOTALS	2406.47	\$1,957,386.00		

*Please note that these are potential private land projects, all of which may not necessarily be completed. All projects are done on either public lands or in cooperation with willing private landowners. Projects not on this list that meet the strategic objectives of the Partnership may be added at any time via submittal of a project list amendment. The projects listed above are from WRP applications previously received and approved by NRCS, and may be close prior to this grant period. Additional new WRP applications will be secured and added to this list once work begins, and throughout the grant period.

LCCMR Phase 6
Protected WRP easements in
LCCMR Corridors



1 inch equals 48 miles



Summary Budget Information for Result 1: Trust Fund Budget: \$ 420,000
Amount Spent: \$ 0
Balance: \$ 420,000

Deliverable	Completion Date	Budget	Status
1. Technical assistance (TA) to help USDA-NRCS secure WRP easements.	6/30/2010	\$420,000	Ongoing
TA activities will include landowner contacts, WRP applications submitted, easement restoration plans submitted, wetland restoration designs, and restoration project oversight/management.			
2. WRP easement secured on 1,000 acres and restoration on 2,000 acres	6/30/2010	NRCS\$	Ongoing

Completion Date: Ongoing, June 30, 2010

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.

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: \$420,000

Staff: \$ 20,000 (for DU supervision & coordination)
Contract Services: \$400,000 (for contracted WRP technicians)
Equipment: \$0
Development: \$0
Restoration: \$0
Acquisition, including easements: \$0 (NRCS buys and holds all WRP easements)
Other: \$0
TOTAL TRUST FUND BUDGET: \$420,000

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

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. All DU shallow lake projects will be completed in partnership with the Minnesota DNR, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, and willing private landowners. DU will work especially closely with the

Minnesota DNR Division of Fish & Wildlife's Shallow Lakes Program. Some private land easement leads on lakes not managed for waterfowl will be referred to the Minnesota Land Trust, DNR, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, or other land trust.

B. Project Impact and Long-term Strategy:

The USDA's Wetland Reserve Program is the most effective wetland restoration program in Minnesota and restores more acres of wetlands and associated native prairie uplands than any other effort. The USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service routinely monitors and enforces the terms of its easements, and works with landowners to manage these restored wetlands and prairie uplands in perpetuity. Through this grant, DU and NRCS will partner to protect or restore 3,000 acres of prairie wetlands and associated uplands, including the lakesheds of key shallow lakes wherever possible. These restored and protected lands will help improve and protect water quality and wildlife habitat in and around shallow lakes throughout the southern and western portion of Minnesota in HCP project areas, often in relatively close proximity to human communities. Importantly, these restored and protected lands will provide important wetland/upland complexes for multiple wildlife species, especially migratory birds that include both game and non-game species. This work helps address the wetland and associated prairie restoration strategies of the Statewide Conservation Plan, and the goals of the DNR's Duck Recovery Plan.

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

The USDA-NRCS estimates that it will spend \$1.5 million or more to secure and restore WRP easements through this grant as a result of assistance from wetland restoration technicians.

D. Spending History: DU received and spent \$350,000 in 2007 through HCP#4 (legal citation: ML 2007, Chapter 30, Section 2, Subdivision 4b) and \$267,500 in 2008 through HCP#5 (legal citation: ML 2008, Chapter 367, Section 2, Subdivision 3c) to help NRCS promote and deliver the Wetlands Reserve Program.

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, and 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. All reports will be generated using the HCP online reporting system.

IX. RESEARCH PROJECTS: Not Applicable

Attachment A: Budget Detail for 2009 Projects					
Project Title: Wetlands Reserve Program (HCP Part 3d)					
Minnesota's Habitat Conservation Partnership Phase 6					
Project Manager Name: Jon Schneider & Tim Koehler					
Trust Fund Appropriation: \$420,000					
DATE: May 28, 2009					
2008 Trust Fund Budget	<u>Result 1 Budget:</u>	Amount Spent	Balance	TOTAL BUDGET	TOTAL BALANCE
	<i>WRP Easements</i>				
BUDGET ITEM			0	0	0
PERSONNEL: wages and benefits (for DU project administration, coordination, and contract tech hiring and supervision)	20,000		20,000	20,000	20,000
Contracts			0	0	0
Professional/technical (contracted WRP wetland restoration field technicians to promote and help NRCS secure WRP easements)	400,000		400,000	400,000	400,000
Other contracts			0	0	0
Other			0	0	0
COLUMN TOTAL	\$420,000	\$0	\$420,000	\$420,000	\$420,000

