

Trust Fund 2009 Work Program

Date of Report: May 1, 2009
Date of Next Progress Report:
Date of Work Program Approval:
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
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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:	\$	0
	Equal Balance:	\$	225,000

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. PROJECT SUMMARY AND RESULTS: Fee title acquisition of 45 acres of significant habitat in the Minnesota River Valley within Carver, Scott, LeSueur or Sibley Counties for expansion of the Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge.

III. PROGRESS SUMMARY AS OF

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: \$ 0
Balance: \$ 225,000

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: June 30, 2011

Result Status as of February 1, 2010:

Result Status as of August 1, 2010:

Result Status as of February 1, 2011:

Final Report Summary:

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:

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

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

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

Phase IV (2008) - \$225,000 ETF and at least \$225,000 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

Prospective Project List:

Project Name	Acres	Habitat	Status
Jessenland Unit Addition, MN Valley Refuge (Sibley County)	100	Floodplain forest and prairie	Discussions underway
St. Lawrence Unit Addition, MN Valley Refuge (Scott County)	103	Wetland and prairie / grassland	Discussions underway
Blakely Unit, MN Valley Refuge (Sibley County)	110	Floodplain forest, wet meadow and shrub carr	Discussions underway with several landowners
Blakely Unit, MN Valley Refuge (Scott County)	Various	Floodplain forest, wet meadow and shrub carr	Discussions underway with numerous landowners

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 <i>(date)</i>	TOTAL BUDGET	TOTAL BALANCE	
	Fee title acquisition of 45 acres					
BUDGET ITEM						
Land acquisition	225,000			225,000	225,000	
COLUMN TOTAL	\$225,000	\$0	\$225,000	\$225,000	\$225,000	