

Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund (ENRTF) 2010 Work Program

Date of Report: November 24, 2009
Date of Next Progress Report: September 1, 2010
Date of Work Program Approval:
Project Completion Date: June 30, 2013

I. PROJECT TITLE: SNA & Native Prairie Restoration, Enhancement & Acquisition

Project Manager: Margaret (Peggy) Booth
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Location: statewide, see attached map

Total ENRTF Project Budget:	ENRTF Appropriation	\$1,750,000
	Minus Amount Spent:	\$ 0
	Equal Balance:	\$1,750,000

Legal Citation: ML 2010, Chap.[____], Sec.[____], Subd.____.

Appropriation Language:

II. PROJECT SUMMARY AND RESULTS:

Sites of biodiversity significance will be permanently protected, their quality improved, and landowner and public support for their conservation increased by implementation of a suite of tools through the DNR Scientific and Natural Area (SNA) Program.

Eighty acres of high quality native prairie and other native plant communities of state significance will be acquired in fee as state Scientific and Natural Area (SNA) or as a Native Prairie Bank (NPB) conservation easement. Sites are Minnesota County Biological Survey priorities because they contain rare and endangered species, undisturbed plant communities, and key habitats for Species of Greatest Conservation Need. Conservation easement monitoring will be initiated on new NPB sites and on 13 NPBs previously acquired through Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund (ENRTF) funding.

Native habitat improvements (restoration, prescribed burning, and invasives treatment) will be implemented on about 3200 acres of SNAs, NPBs, and high priority private prairie lands that are threatened or degraded by human impacts, invasives, and/or lack

of natural disturbance regimes. Interpretive signs-kiosks will be installed at about 4 SNAs and development work (signs, fences, site cleanup, etc.) completed at about 5 sites. Adaptive management plans will be completed for 9 sites. Habitat management at about 18 sites will be ecologically monitored to continuously improve methods.

Conservation by private landowners of native prairie will be achieved through prairie management consultation to at least 40 private landowners, delivery of 30 prairie stewardship plans, co-hosting 6 workshops/field days, distributing new education materials, and enrolling or certifying about 90 landowners in the Prairie Tax Exemption Program.

III. PROGRESS SUMMARY AS OF *[insert date of Work Program progress report]:*

IV. OUTLINE OF PROJECT RESULTS:

RESULT 1: Protection of Sites of Biodiversity Significance

Description: Sites are identified by Minnesota County Biological Survey (MCBS) as priorities for protection because they contain rare and endangered plant and animal species, undisturbed plant communities, and key habitats for Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN) identified in the State Wildlife Action Plan (SWAP). In addition, to be eligible for Scientific and Natural Area (SNA) acquisition and designation, an Ecological Evaluation for each geographic area must be approved by the Commissioner's Advisory Committee. This work directly implements Habitat Recommendation 1 (Protect priority land habitats) and Habitat Recommendation 3 (Improve connectivity and access to outdoor recreation) of the LCCMR Statewide Conservation and Preservation Plan (SCPP); and, pending site availability, may also contribute towards implementation Habitat Recommendation 2A (Acquire high-priority shorelands) and Land Use Recommendation 8 (Protect large blocks of forestland) . Also, SNA acquisition and designation of these sites contributes towards achievement of the SNA Long Range Plan.

Specifically, the SNA Program will protect and buffer sites of biodiversity significance by fee acquisition and designation as SNAs approximately 40 acres and by acquisition of Native Prairie Bank (NPB) conservation easements on approximately 40 acres. Conservation easement monitoring will be initiated on new sites and on 13 NPBs previously acquired with ENRTF funding. About 1-2 sites will be protected as designated SNA at about \$5,000 to \$15,000/acre depending on appraised land values plus project costs; and 1-2 sites will be protected as NPB easements at about \$2,000 to \$3,000/acre per statutory formula plus project costs.

Summary Budget Information for Result 1:	ENRTF Budget:	\$523,600
	Amount Spent:	\$ 0
	Balance:	\$523,600

Deliverable/Outcome	Completion Date	Budget
1. fee acquisition & SNA designation of ~40 acres of high quality native habitat	12/31/2012	\$381,900
2. acquisition of NPB conservation easement ~40 acres of native prairie	12/31/2012	\$94,500
3. baseline property reports & initial monitoring for ~14 NPB CEs	6/30/2013	\$47,200

Result Completion Date: 6/30/2013 (the intention is to complete all this work by 6/30/2012)

Result Status as of September 1, 2010:

Result Status as of March 1, 2011:

Result Status as of September 1, 2011:

Result Status as of March 1, 2012:

Result Status as of September 1, 2012:

Result Status as of March 1, 2013:

Final Report Summary:

RESULT 2: Native Habitat Restoration & Enhancement

Description:

The health and sustainability of native biodiversity of native prairie, savanna, old growth forest, and other native plant communities will be improved through restoration and enhancement activities and understanding of rare resources increased through interpretive signage. This will contribute towards implementation of the SWAP through restoration of degraded and rare land features (particularly native prairie, savanna, and forest) needed to support SGCN and thereby helps achieve Habitat Recommendation 5 (Restore lands, wetlands, and wetland-associated watersheds) and Habitat Recommendation 7 (Keep water on the landscape) of the SCPP. This project also incorporates science-based monitoring which is crucial for evaluation of whether or not management actions are achieving desired outcomes and subsequently re-directing adaptive management decisions. The SCPP recognizes that by investing in knowledge infrastructure through activities such as monitoring “action and policy will become more effective and precise over time” (p.25. Furthermore, this project’s monitoring activities address SWAP’s Strategy II C (Monitor long-term changes to SGCN populations and habitats) and Strategy II D (Create performance measures and maintain information systems).

Specifically, restoration and enhancement activities will be completed on about 3200 acres at about 20 SNAs, 8 NPBs, and 8 native prairie stewardship sites. Interpretive signs-kiosks will be developed and installed at about 4 SNAs. Site development activities (e.g. signs, fences, parking areas, site clean-up) will be completed at about 5 sites. Management at about 18 SNA or NPB sites will be monitored for adaptive management purposes. Also, additional features will be added to the Division's Adaptive Management Spatial Database (currently under development) in order to associate monitoring results with management activities and their measurable objectives.

Restoration and enhancement activities – including bringing sites acquired up to minimum standards – will be carried out by DNR staff-SNA crews, Minnesota Conservation Corps (MCC), Sentence to Service (STS), volunteers, and/or contractors. Activities include seed collection, planting, exotics control, woody encroachment removal, site clean-up, signing (including development and installation of interpretive kiosks), fencing, prescribed burns, management plan preparation, and monitoring (and associated adaptive management database development). All restoration will use seeds or plants of a local ecotype, collected whenever possible from onsite or within 25 miles.

Summary Budget Information for Result 2: ENRTF Budget: \$839,600
Amount Spent: \$ 0
Balance: \$839,600

Deliverable/Outcome	Completion Date	Budget
1. ~90 ac: prairie, forest, etc. reconstruction	6/30/2013	\$94,300
2. ~250 ac: woody removal & exotics species treatment	6/30/2012	\$188,700
3. ~ 2900 ac: prescribed burns	6/30/2013	\$330,200
4. ~4 SNA interpretive kiosks installed & development work on ~5 sites	12/31/2012	\$18,900
5. adaptive management plans completed for ~9 SNAs (incl new acquisitions as time permits)	6/30/2013	\$66,000
6. adaptive management monitoring on ~ 18 SNA-NPB sites & development of SNA adaptive management spatial database	6/30/2013	\$141,500

Result Completion Date: 6/30/2013 (the intention is to complete all this work by 6/30/2012)

Result Status as of September 1, 2010:

Result Status as of March 1, 2011:

Result Status as of September 1, 2011:

Result Status as of March 1, 2012:

Result Status as of September 1, 2012:

Result Status as of March 1, 2013:

Final Report Summary:

RESULT 3: Native Prairie Landowner Assistance & Incentives

Description: At one time, native prairie occupied 18,000,000 acres in Minnesota. Today, less than one percent (about 170,000 acres) of Minnesota's native prairie remains, and nearly 95,000 acres remains in private ownership. Thus, the future of native prairie conservation is dependent upon engaging its private landowners through a suite of native prairie conservation incentives and assistance tools. This result continues and expands the ENRTF-supported accelerated prairie stewardship work to assist private landowners through management consultation, information, delivery of prairie stewardship plans, and increasing participation in the Prairie Tax Exemption (PTE) Program. This work directly implements Habitat Recommendation 13 (Habitat and landscape conservation and training programs for all citizens) of the SSCP and a SWAP's priority conservation action (provide technical assistance to interested individuals and organizations).

Specifically, this result focuses on four key tools to gain private landowner participation in conserving their native prairie. Six prairie management workshops-field days and new outreach materials for private landowners will be developed and delivered. This includes partnering with other technical assistance providers to assure they are delivering consistent native prairie conservation messages. DNR staff will meet with at least 40 landowners to listen to their goals, examine their property, and provide technical consultation on how to best manage their prairie. At least 30 landowners will receive a contractor or staff-prepared comprehensive prairie stewardship plan, including an evaluation their prairie's condition, identification of management needs, and recommendations for management action. In addition, about 90 native prairie landowners will be contacted and site visits conducted by contractor or staff to enroll or recertify them in the PTE program. Note: neither participating landowners nor PTE counties receive any payments under this Result; funds are for contractors or staff to work with landowners.

Summary Budget Information for Result 3:

ENRTF Budget:	\$386,800
Amount Spent:	\$ 0
Balance:	\$386,800

Deliverable/Outcome	Completion Date	Budget
1. 6 workshops-field days & outreach mtl. delivered to prairie landowners (& other asst. providers)	6/30/2013	\$37,700
2. consultations, guidance, mgmt asst, etc to 40 landowners	6/30/2012	\$75,500
3. stewardship plans provided to 30 landowners	6/30/2013	\$188,700

4. ~90 landowners enrolled or recertified in Prairie Tax	6/30/2013	\$84,900
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Result Completion Date: 6/30/2013 (the intention is to complete all this work by 6/30/2012)

Result Status as of September 1, 2010:

Result Status as of March 1, 2011:

Result Status as of September 1, 2011:

Result Status as of March 1, 2012:

Result Status as of September 1, 2012:

Result Status as of March 1, 2013:

Final Report Summary:

V. TOTAL ENRTF PROJECT BUDGET:

Personnel: \$796,400 – classified & unclassified specialists & technicians paid almost exclusively with special project funds (3.58 FTEs); classified project & contract coordinator (new function - 0.48 FTE); and project crews (laborers and seasonal burn crew 2.57 FTEs). *Note: all these FTEs are for two years only – if work needs to extend into the 3rd year of the appropriation, FTEs will drop proportionately for those deliverables.*

Contracts: \$395,000 – to be selected through state bid process, for deliverables including: NPB baseline property reports & monitoring (~\$23K); interpretive signs and other site development (~\$4.5K); SNA adaptive management plans (~\$12.5K); adaptive management monitoring (~\$24K); outreach materials development (~\$3K); private prairie stewardship plans (~\$112K); prairie tax exemption certification and enrollment (~\$19K); native habitat reconstruction (~\$22K); woody encroachment removal & exotics control (~\$75K); and prescribed burning (~\$100K).

Equipment/Tools/Supplies/Printing: \$54,000 – fleet charges for trucks, cars, & equipment (~\$30.4K); parts, repair costs & supplies for restoration & enhancement (~\$13.7K); interpretive signs, other signs, fences, etc (~\$4.8K); workshops (~\$1.2K); printing (~\$8.2K).

Acquisition (Fee Title or Permanent Easements): \$452,700 – with fee and easement to be held by the DNR and administered by the SNA Program.

Travel: \$9,900 – instate for field work.

Additional Budget Items: \$42,000 – landowner costshare for restoration work (\$25K); DNR MIS charges for database development (\$17K).

TOTAL ENRTF PROJECT BUDGET: \$1,750,000

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

VI. PROJECT STRATEGY:

A. Project Partners: The SNA program staff are primarily responsible for this work. Other Divisions, conservation groups, and NGOs will be involved where appropriate to achieve mutual project aims – including Metro Conservation Corridor partners, The Nature Conservancy, STS, and MCC. No funding through this appropriation is earmarked to go to partners. However, they may bid for and receive contracts with us through normal DNR bidding procedures.

B. Project Impact and Long-term Strategy: This project will help protect and perpetuate rare species, SGCNs, and natural features of state significance across the state selected because of their importance and strategic value. As a part of the State Outdoor Recreation system, SNA sites promote public access and opportunities to the public for nature observation and study. NPBs also allow for public access.

The SNA Long Range Plan has a goal of protection through SNA designation within each ecological subsection of five occurrences of each native plant community (NPC) and three occurrences of each natural heritage element found in that subsection. This plan identifies a substantial need for more SNA land acquisition and native habitat restoration/development for at least the next 2 decades. In addition, through either NPB or SNA, the Division's goal is to permanently protect an additional 30,000 acres of sites with high or outstanding quality native prairie. Both NPB and SNA are starting implementation of adaptive management which requires ecological monitoring of managed sites to continuously inform and improve methods. Towards this end, the Division could readily utilize support from the Environment and Natural Resources Trust fund of \$8M to \$12M per biennium over the next 20 years.

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

An estimated \$26,500 in kind directly related to this project (e.g. general fund-supported project manager and Prairie Biologist staff time; and volunteers and STS service) is expected to be contributed to this project (but not tracked for reporting purposes). Approximately \$245,000 in Department Operations and Division Support charges accruing to this project will be covered by Division general funds and other eligible Division funds. (See Attachment B.)

In addition, this Environment and Natural Resource Trust Fund appropriation will be supplemented by other state funding (e.g. bonding and potentially L-SOHC, invasives species, heritage enhancement, and RIM match) and non-state funds (e.g. federal SWG, private funds, and partial landowner donations) as needed to complete priority acquisitions and do additional restoration, development, and prairie stewardship work during this project time frame. This additional funding is to accomplish acres, etc. not included in the deliverables listed in this work program. Other funding sources and amounts used towards completing this appropriation's acquisition projects will be listed and acreages pro-rated in acquisition project reports and work program updates.

D. Spending History:

LCCMR appropriations FY 2005-2009 (not including Habitat Corridors Partnership – which is in separate LCCMR work program): FY 2005 SNA Statewide \$134K – ML

2005, 1st Spec. Sess., Chap. 1, Art. 2, Sec. 11, Subd. 5(c); 2005 Prairie Stewardship \$100K – ML 2005, 1st Spec. Sess., Chap. 1 Art. 2, Sec. 11, Subd. 05(d); 2005 SNA Metro Corridors \$300K – ML 2005, 1st Spec. Sess., Chap. 1, Art. 2, Sec. 11, Subd.5(b); 2007 Prairie Stewardship \$220K – ML 2007, Chap. 30, Sec.2, Subd.4(d); 2007 SNA Metro Corridors \$243K – ML 2007, Chap. 30, Sec. 2, Subd. 4(c); 2008 SNA Statewide \$1M – ML 2008, Chap. Chap. 367, Sec. 2, Subd. 3(f); 2008 SNA Metro Corridors \$515K – ML 2008, Chap. 367, Sec. 2, Subd. 3(a); Accelerated Prairie (Results 3,4 & 6 only) \$975K – ML 2008, Chap. 367, Sec. 2, Subd. 3(m); 2009 SNA Statewide \$590K – ML 2009, Chap. 143, Sec. 2, Subd. 4(d); and 2009 SNA Metro Corridors \$410K – ML 2009, Chap. 143, Sec. 2, Subd. 4(f).

Other State appropriations FY06-10 for SNA program PROJECT work: annual appropriations of Heritage Enhancement ~ \$100K/year; 2007 RIM Match \$78K; 2009-10 RIM Match \$62K; 2009 Remediation grant \$120K; 2009-10 BWSR Native Buffer grant \$46.768K; 2009-09 Invasives Species grant \$80K; 2010 Invasives Species grant \$100K; 2006 bonding SNA \$2M; 2006 bonding Native Prairie Bank \$1M; 2008 SNA bonding \$1M; and 2008 Native Prairie bonding \$4M.

Non-state funding FY06-10. Federal funds spent to date (11/23/09) in FY06-10: State Wildlife Grants for SNA work \$135.6K and for monitoring \$109.6K; Landowner Incentive Program – Native Prairie \$839.5K; and LAWCON \$384K. Other funds spent: The Conservation Fund (Doris Duke) \$38K; Dakota County \$566K; and other partner contributions and landowner donations.

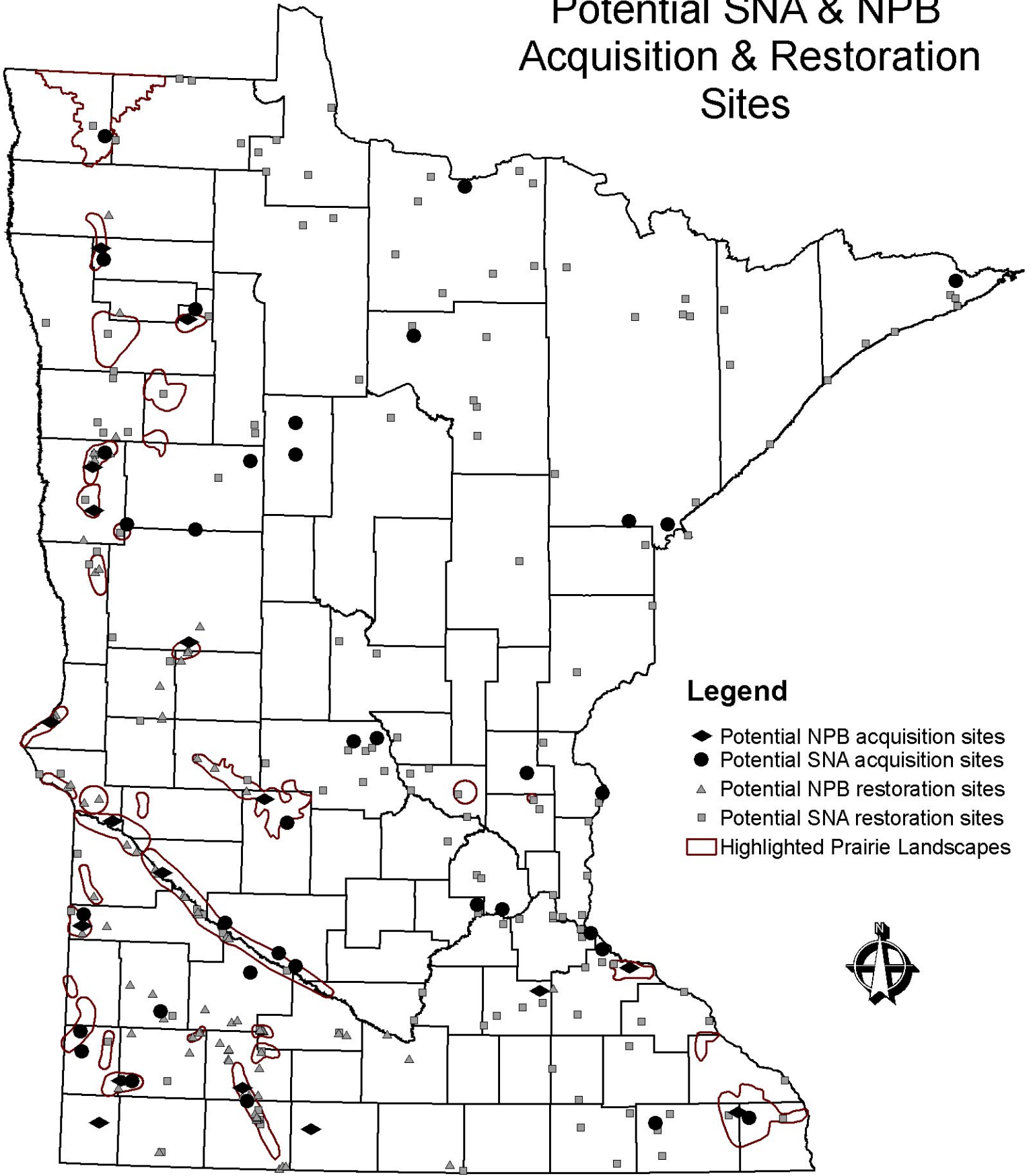
VII. DISSEMINATION: SNA in cooperation with its partners will issue a press release and/or publicize a dedication event for each fee acquisition completed through this project and for each workshop held through this appropriation.

VIII. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS: Periodic work program progress reports will be submitted not later than September 1 and March 1 of each year, starting September 1, 2010. A final work program report and associated products will be submitted between June 30 and August 1, 2013 as requested by the LCCMR.

IX. RESEARCH PROJECTS: NA

Attachment A: Budget Detail for 2010 Projects - Summary and a Budget page for each partner (if applicable)											
Project Title: SNA & Native Prairie Restoration, Enhancement & Acquisition											
Project Manager Name: Margaret (Peggy) Booth											
Trust Fund Appropriation: \$1,750,000											
2010 Trust Fund Budget	Result 1 Budget:	Amount Spent (date)	Balance (date)	Result 2 Budget:	Amount Spent (date)	Balance (date)	Result 3 Budget:	Amount Spent (date)	Balance (date)	TOTAL BUDGET	TOTAL BALANCE
	Protection			Restoration & Enhancement			Landowner Assistance				
BUDGET ITEM											
PERSONNEL: wages and benefits classified & unclassified specialists & technicians paid almost exclusively with special project funds (3.58 FTEs); classified project & contract coordinator (new function - 0.48 FTE); and project crews (laborers and seasonal burn crew 2.57 FTEs)	44,200		44,200	517,200		517,200	235,000		235,000	796,400	796,400
Contracts											
Professional/technical Contractors (to be selected through state bid process) for deliverables including NPB baseline property reports & monitoring (~\$23K); interpretive signs and other site development (~\$4.5K); SNA adaptive management plans (~\$12.5K); adaptive management monitoring (~\$24K); outreach materials development (~\$3K); private prairie stewardship plans (~\$112K); and prairie tax exemption certification and enrollment (~\$19K)	23,000		23,000	41,000		41,000	134,000		134,000	198,000	198,000
Other contracts (to be selected through state bid process) for deliverables including native habitat reconstruction (~\$22K), woody encroachment removal & exotics control (~\$75K), and prescribed burning (~\$100K)	0		0	197,000		197,000	0		0	197,000	197,000
Non-capital Equipment / Tools fleet charges for trucks, cars, & equipment (~\$30.4K)	1,900		1,900	22,300		22,300	6,200		6,200	30,400	30,400
Land acquisition	350,000		350,000			0			0	350,000	350,000
Easement acquisition	72,000		72,000			0			0	72,000	72,000
Professional Services for Acq. (including LAM transaction and survey charges, attorney general charges, title work charges, abstracts, filing fees, deed tax, etc)	30,700		30,700			0			0	30,700	30,700
Printing	400		400	800		800	7,000		7,000	8,200	8,200
Supplies parts, repair costs & supplies for restoration & enhancement (~13.7\$K); interpretive signs, other signs, fences, etc (~\$4.8K); and workshops (~\$1.2K)	200		200	14,000		14,000	1,200		1,200	15,400	15,400
Travel expenses in Minnesota	1,200		1,200	5,300		5,300	3,400		3,400	9,900	9,900
Other landowner costshare for restoration work (\$25K); and DNR MIS charges for database development (\$17K)	0		0	42,000		42,000			0	42,000	42,000
COLUMN TOTAL	\$523,600	\$0	\$523,600	\$839,600	\$0	\$839,600	\$386,800	\$0	\$386,800	\$1,750,000	\$1,750,000

Potential SNA & NPB Acquisition & Restoration Sites



Legend

- ◆ Potential NPB acquisition sites
- Potential SNA acquisition sites
- ▲ Potential NPB restoration sites
- Potential SNA restoration sites
- Highlighted Prairie Landscapes



0 15 30 60 90 120 Miles

There are currently 147 Scientific & Natural Areas and 92 Native Prairie Banks

