

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

Farmers' Legal Action Group, Inc. (FLAG)

Farmland Conservation in Minnesota

Date of Report: N/A
Date of Next Progress Report: January 31, 2011
Date of Work Program Approval:
Project Completion Date: June 30, 2011

I. PROJECT TITLE: Farmland Conservation in Minnesota

Project Manager: Jennifer Jambor-Delgado, J.D.
Affiliation: Farmers' Legal Action Group, Inc. (FLAG)
Mailing Address: 360 North Robert St. #500
City / State / Zip: Saint Paul, MN 55101
Telephone Number: 651-223-5400
E-mail Address: JJambor-delgado@flaginc.org
FAX Number: 651-223-5335
Web Site address: www.flaginc.org

Location: Saint Paul, MN; with outreach throughout the state.

Total Trust Fund Project Budget:	Trust Fund Appropriation:	\$ 100,000
	Minus Amount Spent:	\$ 0
	Equal Balance:	\$ 100,000

Legal Citation: M.L. 2010, Chp. 362, Sec. 2, Subd. 3j

Appropriation Language:

\$100,000 is from the trust fund to the commissioner of natural resources for an agreement with the Farmers Legal Action Group, Inc. to assess the implementation of applicable laws for preserving agricultural land and develop a comprehensive and systematic approach and policy tools to preserve agricultural lands.

II. PROJECT SUMMARY AND RESULTS:

Minnesota's Statewide Conservation and Preservation Plan recommended that the state: "Invest in farm and forest preservation to prevent fragmentation due to development." As the Plan recognized, farmland preservation has a critical impact on the quality of state's natural resources—water quality and quantity; biodiversity; economic, recreational, and cultural health—and is central to natural resource conservation. But the laws that affect farmland preservation are now an inconsistent patchwork of local, county, and state laws, many of which either

ignore or even deter the conservation of the natural resource that is open agricultural space. This Project will work on a statewide basis to preserve valuable farmland and promote its ecological and public benefits by developing statewide legal policy and zoning tools and a broader policy strategy that will preserve our state's diminishing agricultural lands, particularly in the regions surrounding the state's urban areas, to ensure that agricultural lands remain an important component of a healthy environment and Minnesota's precious natural resources.

FLAG's legal staff will review and analyze applicable laws; interview farmers and solicit their experiences and input; convene meetings of stakeholders and experts who are knowledgeable about and can speak to challenges to preservation of Minnesota's farmland; assess the effectiveness of current and potential laws and regulations for preserving agricultural land; and develop a recommended comprehensive and systematic approach and policy tools to preserve agricultural lands.

III. PROGRESS SUMMARY AS OF

IV. OUTLINE OF PROJECT RESULTS:

RESULT/ACTIVITY 1: *Preserving Minnesota Agricultural Land: Proposed Policy Solutions*

Description: FLAG's legal staff will review and analyze farmland preservation models in Minnesota and across the nation; interview farmers and solicit their experiences and input; convene meetings of stakeholders and experts who are knowledgeable about and can speak to challenges to preservation of Minnesota farmland; and produce proposed policy options, solutions, and tools that promote a more comprehensive and systematic approach to preserving Minnesota's farmland.

Summary Budget Information for Result/Activity 1:

Trust Fund Budget: \$100,000
Amount Spent: \$ 0
Balance: \$100,000

<u>Deliverable/Outcome</u>	<u>Completion Date</u>	<u>Budget</u>
1. Review and analyze existing Minnesota laws and models relevant to farmland preservation.	October 30, 2010	\$ 10,000
2. Interview stakeholders regarding efficacy of existing Minnesota laws and models relevant to farmland preservation.	March 31, 2011	\$ 15,000
3. Review and analyze farmland preservation	January 31, 2011	\$ 15,000

<u>Deliverable/Outcome</u>	<u>Completion Date</u>	<u>Budget</u>
models from other states.		
4. Interview stakeholders regarding efficacy of farmland preservation models from other states.	April 30, 2011	\$ 15,000
5. Convene and solicit input from stakeholders regarding a comprehensive approach to farmland preservation.	April 30, 2011	\$ 15,000
6. "Preserving Minnesota Agricultural Land: Proposed Policy Solutions," report and recommendations.	July 31, 2011	\$ 30,000
	GRANT TOTAL	\$ 100,000

Result Status as of January 31, 2011:

Result Status as of July 31, 2011:

Final Report Summary:

V. TOTAL TRUST FUND PROJECT BUDGET: \$100,000

PROJECT BUDGET: \$100,000; One year, July 1, 2010 – June 30, 2011	
<u>BUDGET ITEM</u>	<u>AMOUNT</u>
Personnel:	
Susan E. Stokes .40 FTE*	\$ 38,772
Jennifer Jambor-Delgado .50 FTE	\$ 34,211
Lynn A. Hayes .10 FTE	\$ 5,982
Stephen Carpenter .20 FTE	\$ 15,425
Graduate Student	\$ 3,375
TOTAL PERSONNEL	\$ 97,765
Computer Research (LexisNexis)	\$ 1,435
Travel: In-state, Mileage, and/or Car Rental	\$ 800
TOTAL TRUST FUND PROJECT BUDGET	\$ 100,000

* Contributions to the project by Susan E. Stokes will be restricted to substantial legal work, which will be tracked in a detailed timekeeping system, and will not include time for project or organizational administration.

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

VI. PROJECT STRATEGY:

A. Project Partners: N/A

B. Project Impact and Long-term Strategy: Minnesota's farmland has a critical and undisputed impact on the state's water quality and quantity, biodiversity, aquatic health, economic health, and recreational, cultural, and spiritual qualities of life. This project will assist the state in considering and devising a broader policy strategy to preserve Minnesota's rapidly diminishing farmland, particularly in the regions surrounding the state's urban areas.

C. Other Funds Proposed to be Spent during the Project Period: FLAG is seeking, but does not currently have, other funds to supplement this project.

D. Spending History: FLAG's work in Minnesota farmland preservation in the two years before July 1, 2010, included funding from The McKnight Foundation (\$50,000), and Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota (\$75,000).

VII. DISSEMINATION: Collaborating with ENRTF officials, FLAG will disseminate this project's report and recommendations through suggested legislative contacts; press releases to prominent general interest and agricultural media outlets; notice to, and a request to be included in, the newsletters and websites of such organizations as the Minnesota Farm Bureau, Minnesota Farmers Union, the Land Stewardship Project, Minnesota Food Association, and associations of Minnesota counties and townships; an announcement to FLAG's e-mail list (almost 2,000 people, many of whom could provide valuable feedback and review); a prominent notice on FLAG's website (www.flaginc.org); and opportunistic inclusion of the report in trainings and conferences.

VIII. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS: Periodic Work Program progress reports will be submitted not later than: January 31, 2011; and July 31, 2011. **A final Work Program report and associated products will be submitted between June 30 and August 1, 2012 as requested by the LCCMR**

IX. RESEARCH PROJECTS: N/A

**2010 Environmental and Natural Resources Trust Fund
Work Program for FLAG Project #133-E1
Farmland Conservation in Minnesota**

Attachment A: Budget Detail for 2010 Projects					
Project Title: Farmland Conservation in Minnesota					
Project Manager Name: Jennifer Jambor-Delgado					
Trust Fund Appropriation: \$ 100,000					
1) See list of non-eligible expenses, do not include any of these items in your budget sheet					
2) Remove any budget item lines not applicable					
2010 Trust Fund Budget	Result 1 Budget:	Amount Spent (date)	Balance July 1, 2010	TOTAL BUDGET	TOTAL BALANCE
	<i>Preserving Minnesota Agricultural Land: Proposed Policy Solutions</i>				
BUDGET ITEM					
PERSONNEL: Wages and Benefits					
Susan E. Stokes .40 FTE (for substantive legal work only)	\$ 38,772		\$ 38,772	\$ 38,772	\$ 38,772
Jennifer Jambor-Delgado .50 FTE	34,211	-	34,211	34,211	34,211
Lynn A. Hayes .10 FTE	5,982	0	5,982	5,982	5,982
Stephen Carpenter .20 FTE	15,425	0	15,425	15,425	15,425
Graduate Student	3,375	0	3,375	3,375	3,375
Computer Research (LexisNexis)	1,435	0	1,435	1,435	1,435
Travel expenses in Minnesota	800	0	800	800	800
COLUMN TOTAL	\$ 100,000	\$ -	\$ 100,000	\$ 100,000	\$ 100,000

