

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

**Date of Report:** Nov. 24, 2009  
**Date of Next Progress Report:** Dec. 1, 2010  
**Date of Work Program Approval:**  
**Project Completion Date:** June 30, 2012

### **I. PROJECT TITLE: HCP Phase VI Supplemental – Prairie Management (2k)**

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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.

<b>Total Trust Fund Project Budget:</b>	<b>ENRTF Appropriation</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>63,000</b>
	<b>Minus Amount Spent:</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>0</b>
	<b>Equal Balance:</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>63,000</b>

**Legal Citation: M.L. 2010, Chp. 362, Sec. 2, Subd. 4f2k**

#### **Appropriation Language:**

\$1,344,000 is added to Laws 2009, chapter 143, section 2, subdivision 4, paragraph (e), from the trust fund for the acceleration of agency programs and cooperative agreements. Of this appropriation, \$308,000 is to the commissioner of natural resources for agency programs and \$1,036,000 is for agreements as follows: \$425,000 with Ducks Unlimited, Inc.; \$50,000 with National Wild Turkey Federation; \$164,000 with the Nature Conservancy; \$102,000 with Minnesota Land Trust; \$200,000 with the Trust for Public Land; \$45,000 with Friends of Detroit Lakes Wetland Management District; and \$50,000 to the Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe 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 an authorized 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.

## **II. PROJECT SUMMARY AND RESULTS:**

This project tackles the 'backlog' of prairie and grassland management needs in priority prairie landscapes, such as woody encroachment removal, prescribed burning, exotic species control, and reconstruction. In addition, select project sites will be monitored as part of the SNA program's adaptive management goals. The project 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. There will be a minimum of 225 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 Prairie Bank Program.

## **III. PROGRESS SUMMARY AS OF**

## **IV. OUTLINE OF PROJECT RESULTS:**

### **Result/Activity 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 and Invasive species control – (\$32,000 for at least 45 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.

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

Prescribed burning – (\$19,000 for at least 170 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.

Restoration/reconstruction – (\$9,000/up to 10 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.

Adaptive Management Monitoring – (\$3,000 to monitor and evaluate 3 project sites) The SNA program is starting to accelerate the use of adaptive management which requires ecological monitoring of managed sites to continuously inform and improve methods. Monitoring methods used will be those being developed in the LCCMR project “Accelerated Prairie Management, Survey, Acquisition and Evaluation” (ML 2008, Chap. 367, Sec.2, Subd. 3m).

**Summary Budget Information for Result/Activity 1:**

**ENRTF Budget:** \$ 63,000  
**Amount Spent:** \$ 0  
**Balance:** \$ 63,000

<b>Deliverable/Outcome</b>	<b>Completion Date</b>	<b>Budget</b>
1. 45 acres of woody and invasive species control	June 30, 2012	\$32,000
2. 170 acres prescribed burning	June 30, 2012	\$19,000
3. 10 acres of restoration/reconstruction	June 30, 2012	\$9,000
4. 3 projects monitored for adaptive management	June 30, 2012	\$3,000

**Result Completion Date:**

**Result Status as of** *(December 1, 2010):*

**Result Status as of** *(June 30, 2011):*

**Result Status as of** *(December 1, 2011):*

**Result Status as of** *(June 30, 2012):*

**Final Report Summary:**

## V. TOTAL ENRTF PROJECT BUDGET:

<u>Budget Item</u>	
<b>*Personnel:</b> DNR staff: NR Specialists, NR Technicians, NR laborers	\$33,500
<b>Contracts:</b> Competitive bid contracts with private vendors and cost-share grants to landowners for prescribed burning, prairie reconstructions, woody encroachment, etc	\$21,000
<b>Equipment/Tools/Supplies:</b> project supplies, vehicle fleet costs (e.g. ATV, Pick-up, ASV tracked vehicle)	\$8,500
<b>Acquisition:</b> <i>none</i>	\$0
<b>Travel:</b> <i>none</i>	\$0
<b>Additional Budget Items:</b> <i>none</i>	\$0
<b>TOTAL ENRTF PROJECT BUDGET:</b>	<b>\$63,000</b>

### \*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 ENRTF PROJECT BUDGET: \$ 63,000**

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

## VI. PROJECT STRATEGY:

**A. Project Partners:** While SNA staff will coordinate the management activities of this project, DNR staff from other programs and divisions will also assist with implementation. External partners that help by adding additional resources to implement activities include The Nature Conservancy and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (e.g. sharing specialized equipment or access to restoration plant materials).

**B. Project Impact and Long-term Strategy:** This project will help protect and perpetuate rare species, Species of Greatest Conservation Needs, and natural features of state significance within the Conservation Partnership project areas because of their importance and strategic value in protecting these rare resources. As a part of the State Outdoor Recreation system, all of these sites are managed as state SNAs that provide public access and opportunities to the public for nature observation and study. 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. The Division of Ecological Resources is in the process of using the recently revised Native Plant Community Classification system to assess the extent of protection for each NPC per subsection - looking at both numbers of occurrences (NPC polygons) and acreage protected. This demonstrates a substantial need for more SNA land acquisition and habitat restoration for at least the next 2 decades. Towards this end, the program could readily utilize support from the Environment and Natural Resources Trust fund and/or the Lessard Outdoor Heritage Council of \$2M to \$8M per biennium over this timeframe. Also see main proposal for Habitat Conservation Partnerships impacts and long-term strategy.

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

An estimated \$1,250 in-kind directly related to this project (e.g. general fund-supported project manager and Prairie Biologist staff time) is expected to be contributed to this project (but not tracked for reporting purposes). Approximately \$8,820 in Department Operations and Division Support charges accruing to this project will be covered by Division general funds or 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 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.

**D. Spending History:** Past HCP spending; 2001: \$36,250 / 2003: \$0 / 2005: \$133,000 / 2007: \$75,000 / 2008: \$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, 2010, June 1, 2011, and December 1, 2011 and the final work program report is due between June 30 and August 1, 2012. All reports will be generated using the HCP online reporting system.

**IX. RESEARCH PROJECTS: NA**

Project sites for 2J – Prairie Management, MN DNR Minnesota's Habitat Conservation  
Partnership Phase VI Supplemental (101-C)

SNA or Native Prairie Bank Name	County	Targeted Practices (FY10-11)				
		Native Plant Community Reconstruction	Woody Encroachment-Invasives Removal	Prescribed Burning	Non-Woody Invasives Control	Potential acres treated
Twin Valley Prairie SNA	Norman		X	X		50
Felton Prairie SNA	Clay			X	X	100
Sandpiper Prairie SNA	Norman		X	X	X	40
Ottertail Prairie SNA	Ottertail		X	X		30
Verlyn Marth Memorial Prairie SNA	Stevens			X	X	10
Clinton Prairie SNA	Big Stone			X	X	40
Bonanza Prairie SNA	Big Stone			X	X	25
Yellow Bank Hills SNA	Lac Qui Parle			X	X	25
Prairie Creek Woods SNA	Rice		X	X	X	10
Glynn Prairie SNA	Lyon			X		15
Lundblad Prairie SNA	Murray			X		20
Des Moines River Prairie SNA	Jackson		X	X	X	50
Holthe Prairie SNA	Jackson		X	X	X	45
Prairie Bush Clover SNA	Jackson		X	X		5
Kasota Prairie SNA	LeSueur		X	X		35
Hythecker Prairie SNA	Dodge		X	X		25
Mound Prairie SNA	Houston		X	X	X	10
Oronoco Prairie SNA	Olmsted		X	X		10
Sedan Brook Prairie SNA	Stearns		X	X		12
Osmundson Prairie SNA	Faribault			X		5
Blanket Flower Prairie SNA	Clay		X	X	X	75
Mickelson PB	Cottonwood			X	X	15
Petersburg 33 PB	Jackson		X	X		15
Schellberg PB	Big Stone		X	X		50
Tanberg 20 PB	Wilkin			X		40
Selix PB	Pope			X	X	10
Odden PB	Lac Qui Parle			X		10
Olsen PB	Grant		X	X		25
Lund 2 PB	Grant		X	X	X	150
Lund 21 PB	Douglas		X	X	X	12
Otrey 26 PB	Big Stone		X	X	X	10
Petersburg 27 PB	Jackson	X	X	X		12
Woodke PB	Grant			X		10
B-B Ranch PB	Clay			X	X	250
Storden 21 PB	Cottonwood		X	X	X	25
Holly 17 PB	Murray			X		20
Lynd 36 and Lyons 1 PB	Lyon		X	X	X	65
Island Lake 22 PB	Lyon			X	X	35
Johnson PB	Big Stone		X	X	X	40
Bilden PB	Wilkin		X	X	X	10
Wallace PB	Ottertail		X	X	X	25
Petersburg 26 PB	Jackson		X	X	X	35
Vegoe PB	Pope			X		20
Strand PB	Clay		X	X		45
Ulen 29 PB	Clay		X	X	X	35
Lake Pleasant 22 PB	Red Lake		X	X		15

Attachment A: Budget Detail for 2010 Projects - Summary and a Budget page for each partner (if applicable)					
Project Title: 2k - Prairie Management – Habitat Conservation Partnership					
Project Manager Name: Jason Garms					
Trust Fund Appropriation: \$63,000					
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 (date)	TOTAL BUDGET	TOTAL BALANCE
	Prairie Management and Restoration				
BUDGET ITEM					
PERSONNEL: wages and benefits (DNR NR Specialists, NR Technicians, NR laborers; a detailed personnel information is included in the Work Program - pg 3)	33,500				
Contracts					
Other contracts (contracts for prescribed burning, prairie reconstructions, woody encroachment, etc. Also includes cost-share agreements for private land projects)	21,000				
Non-capital Equipment / Tools (vehicle fleet costs (e.g. ATV, Pick-up, ASV tracked vehicle)	7,500				
Supplies (herbicide, safety supplies, etc)	1,000				
COLUMN TOTAL	\$63,000	\$0	\$63,000	\$0	\$0

