

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

Date of Report: January 28, 2010
Date of Next Progress Report: June 1, 2011
Date of Work Program Approval:
Project Completion Date: June 30, 2013

I. PROJECT TITLE: Minnesota Conservation Apprenticeship Academy

Project Manager: Steve Woods
Affiliation: Board of Water and Soil Resources
Mailing Address: 520 Lafayette Road
City / State / Zip: St. Paul, MN 55155
Telephone Number: 651-297-7748
E-mail Address: steve.woods@state.mn.us
Fax Number: 651-297-5615
Web Site Address: www.bwsr.state.mn.us

Location: Statewide applicability

Total ENRTF Project Budget:	ENRTF Appropriation	\$ 368,000
	Minus Amount Spent:	\$ 0
	Equal Balance:	\$ 368,000

Legal Citation: M.L. 2010, Chap. 362, Sec. 2, Subd. 8a

Appropriation Language:

\$368,000 is from the trust fund to the Board of Water and Soil Resources in cooperation with the Minnesota Conservation Corps or its successor to train and mentor future conservation professionals by providing apprenticeship service opportunities to soil and water conservation districts. This appropriation is available until June 30, 2013, by which time the project must be completed and the final products delivered.

II. PROJECT SUMMARY AND RESULTS:

Familiarizing future conservation leaders with Minnesota's various land-use practices, water and soil resources, plant and animal habitats, and landowner concerns is needed to maintain the capacity of local organizations to deliver conservation on the ground. Many of the conservation districts' most experienced conservation professionals and practitioners are nearing retirement age but due to budget constraints will not be replaced until they have left employment. Consequently, Minnesota is missing a great opportunity to transfer knowledge and experience to the next generation responsible for Minnesota's conservation.

While college graduates with conservation-related degrees are knowledgeable in technology, theory, and research methods, their practical, on-the-ground skills need development. Communicating with landowners and adjusting designs for field nuances are vital to the success of conservation projects and best learned from seasoned

professionals. In turn, apprentices will bring knowledge of emerging technologies and other innovations to improve the quality and productivity of current conservation efforts. This allows for a cross-pollination of ideas and solutions for natural resource challenges.

This program will approach environmental-related departments at several universities beginning in the fall of 2010 to recruit current students for apprenticeship positions during the summers of 2011 and 2012. The Minnesota Conservation Corps (MCC) will be the employer of record, however 30 Soil and Water Conservation Districts will provide a workplace, mentor, and daily supervision. MCC will recruit candidates, pay a monthly stipend, and provide for AmeriCorps service credits and educational rewards.

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

IV. OUTLINE OF PROJECT RESULTS:

RESULT/ACTIVITY 1: develop academy structure, recruit participating SWCDs, and develop 30 employment agreements

Description: The intent is to create a solid foundation for running an apprentice program for multiple years. Result one is administratively focused as the details of the employment arrangements are critical for all parties—MCC, SWCDs, and the prospective apprentice.

MCC will contact SWCDs about interest in the program and solicit some notion of the quality of the experience they can provide the apprentices. The same needs are there for finding the students at institutions. We need to develop contacts at schools, evaluating the programs in which the candidates are enrolled so they have the background necessary to take advantage of the placement, and create selection criteria. The screening and selecting of individuals for the program will be carried out by MCC as well.

MCC staff will administer the AmeriCorps enrollment requirements etc. for those selected. For example, an initial training session is necessary prior to placement to orient the participants similar to other MCC corps members. BWSR will seek a contracting party to assist in providing additional training beyond core MCC training..

Summary Budget Information for Result/Activity 1:

ENRTF Budget: \$50000
Amount Spent: \$ 0
Balance: \$50000

Deliverable/Outcome	Completion Date	Budget
1. executed contract between BWSR and MCC	August 30, 2010	\$ 2,000
2. employment agreement format and program documentation describing schedule and duties; employment agreements and mgmt	October 15, 2010	24,000
3. list of interested SWCDs (incl. primary mentor)	November 30, 2010	3,000

4. year two employment agreements & mgmt	May 1, 2012	19,000
5. year two interested SWCDs list	November 30, 2011	2,000

Result Completion Date: June 1, 2012
Result Status as of June 1, 2011:
Result Status as of October 30, 2011:
Result Status as of June 1, 2012:
Final Report Summary: June 30, 2013

RESULT/ACTIVITY 2: Recruit, select, and train academy participants; and repeat for year two

Description: BWSR and MCC will approach University of Minnesota, MnSCU, and other local university environmental programs for assistance in recruiting candidates. MCC will work to match potential participants with willing SWCDs and Technical Service Areas (TSA – a joint powers entity of SWCDs). Both the SWCD and the apprentices will be provided training to clarify expectations and requirements for the successful participation in the program. MCC will serve as the employer of record and handle all payroll and personnel related issues (e.g. AmeriCorps credits) until conclusion of summer employment.

Summary Budget Information for Result/Activity 2:

ENRTF Budget: \$318000
Amount Spent: \$ 0
Balance: \$318000

Deliverable/Outcome	Completion Date	Budget
1. recruiting time and materials for use at educational institutions	October 15, 2010	\$ 5,000
2. match candidates with interested SWCDs	January 31, 2010	3,000
3. employ 30 apprentices in year one	October 15, 2011	152,000
4. close out year one and evaluate	December 31, 2011	3,000
5. employ 30 apprentices in year two	October 15, 2012	152,000
6. close out and evaluate	November 30, 2012	3,000

Result Completion Date: December 31, 2012
Result Status as of June 1, 2011:
Result Status as of October 30, 2011:
Result Status as of June 1, 2012:
Result Status as of December 31, 2012
Final Report Summary: June 30, 2013

V. TOTAL ENRTF PROJECT BUDGET:

Personnel: \$ 4,000
Contracts : \$ 364,000
Staff Salaries: \$ 59,289 (Program Manager and Recruiter)
Apprentice Stipends: \$ 273,600

Apprentice Orientation and Training: \$ 14,560
Apprentice Recruitment: \$ 2,000
Travel: \$ 13,551 (within contract; state employee travel will be in-kind)

TOTAL ENRTF PROJECT BUDGET: \$368,000

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

VI. PROJECT STRATEGY:

A. Project Partners: MCC via contract, MN Association of SWCDs, individuals SWCDs, University and State College systems

B. Project Impact and Long-term Strategy: Effort provides immediate technical assistance to accelerate conservation delivery utilizing typical funding sources such as RIM, WRP, CRP, EQIP, flood recovery, cost-share, and the constitutional funds for habitat and clean water. In the long-term we expect the participants will enlighten the each other—the interns gain experience, the SWCDs gain emerging technologies. Our hope is that, following the completion of LCCMR participation, that the program can ultimately utilize the new Clean Water Fund as it is not a program which previously existed and is therefore not supplanting of existing efforts.

C. Other Funds Proposed to be Spent during the Project Period: In-kind staff hours of the SWCDs and BWSR staff will be the largest direct money. (Indirect funds described in “Project Impact” are very large but more realistically associated with the design and construction of projects more so than the apprentices.)

D. Spending History: There have not been previous LCMR or LCCMR appropriations

VII. DISSEMINATION: The MCC will be the primary disseminator and provide a link on their website (www.conservationcorps.org) describing the program. BWSR and MASWCD will also offer a brief description of the program and a link to the MCC site. MASWCD has already been spreading this idea nationally through the National Association of Conservation Districts.

VIII. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS: Periodic work program progress reports will be submitted not later than June 1, 2011, October 30, 2011, June 1, 2012, and November 30, 2012. A final work program report and associated products **cannot** be submitted between June 30 and August 1, 2011 as requested by the LCCMR due to the the need for the summer internships to run into September. Final end date is therefore June 30, 2013.

IX. RESEARCH PROJECTS: NA

Attachment A: Budget Detail for 2010 Projects - Summary and a Budget page for each partner (if applicable)								
Project Title: Minnesota Conservation Program Apprenticeship Academy								
Project Manager Name: Steve Woods								
Trust Fund Appropriation: \$								
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)	Result 2 Budget:	Amount Spent (date)	Balance (date)	TOTAL BUDGET	TOTAL BALANCE
	Develop academy structure, recruit participating SWCDs, and develop 30 site agreements (Program planning)			Recruit, select, and train academy participants (Program implementation)				
BUDGET ITEM								
BWSR								
PERSONNEL: wages and benefits Angie Becker-Kudelka training coordinator @ 0.05 FTE (non-general fund employee)	\$ 5,000	\$ -	\$ 5,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000
Contracts - MINNESOTA CONSERVATION CORPS								
Professional/technical								
Program Manager @ 80% FTE, Recruiter @ 6% FTE, Administration	\$ 43,349	\$ -	\$ 43,349	\$ 15,940	\$ -	\$ 15,940	\$ 59,289	\$ 59,289
30 SWCD Apprentices for 540 hours per year for two years	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 273,600	\$ -	\$ 273,600	\$ 273,600	\$ 273,600
Other direct operating costs								
Apprentice orientation and training, sub-contract tech train	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 14,560	\$ -	\$ 14,560	\$ 14,560	\$ 14,560
Apprentice recruitment/advertising expense, background checks	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 2,000	\$ -	\$ 2,000	\$ 2,000	\$ 2,000
Travel expenses in Minnesota (Mileage for 1 staff vehicle @\$.50 per mile)	\$ 1,651	\$ -	\$ 1,651	\$ 11,900	\$ -	\$ 11,900	\$ 13,551	\$ 13,551
COLUMN TOTAL	\$50,000	\$0	\$50,000	\$318,000	\$0	\$318,000	\$368,000	\$368,000

