

**Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund
2011-2012 Request for Proposals (RFP)**

Subd: 04i3.1

Project Title: 3.1 - MeCC 6 - TPL's Critical Land Protection Program

Category: D. Land Acquisition for Habitat and Recreation

Total Project Budget: \$ 500,000

Proposed Project Time Period for the Funding Requested: 3 yrs, July 2011 - June 2014

Other Non-State Funds (secured): \$ 0

Summary:

Strategic acquisition of an estimated 30 acres of high quality habitat and approximately 0.3 miles of shoreline in scientifically evaluated wildlife corridors within the greater Twin Cities Metropolitan Area.

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Sponsoring Organization: The Trust for Public Land

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Location:

Region: Metro

Ecological Section: Minnesota and NE Iowa Morainal (222M)

County Name: Anoka, Carver, Chisago, Dakota, Goodhue, Hennepin, Isanti, Le Sueur, Nicollet, Ramsey, Rice, Scott, Sherburne, Sibley, Washington, Wright

City / Township:

2011-2012 MAIN PROPOSAL

PROJECT TITLE: TPL's Critical Land Protection Program- MeCC VI 2011

I. PROJECT STATEMENT

The proposed project includes strategic acquisition of an estimated 30 acres of high quality habitat and approximately 0.3 miles of shoreline in scientifically evaluated wildlife corridors within the greater Twin Cities Metropolitan Area. ENRTF dollars will leverage additional funds to approximately double the acres and miles protected with ENRTF dollars alone. An estimated 255,000 acres of high quality natural lands (MNDNR 2003) remain in the seven county metro area and only 32% is currently protected by DNR, US Fish and Wildlife Service, or as regional parks or nature preserves.

The goal of this effort is to protect portions of the remaining high quality land and water habitat that can provide as many benefits as possible. Benefits include: resilience of animal and plant populations (including "Species in Greatest Conservation Need") to climate change by focusing work within migration/connectivity corridors; protection of our lakes, rivers, streams and the quality of our ground water; and access for "close to home" outdoor recreation, study, and quiet enjoyment where nearly 60% of the state's population lives. Land acquisitions also contribute to the state and region's economic vitality by injecting cash into the marketplace, by triggering deed tax revenues to the state, by attracting additional funds from non-state sources, and by providing jobs to the professionals involved in the process including environmental consultants, closers and title insurers, surveyors, appraisers, etc. All lands acquired will be priorities as demonstrated through adopted state, regional, or local natural resource plans.

The economic recession has provided some once-in-a-lifetime unique opportunities: landowners previously not interested in selling are now motivated and land prices have fallen so that properties are now available at a fraction of the price in other times. This effort aims to focus on those unique opportunities as well as to continue building on past work accomplished through previous years ENRTF funding.

II. DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT ACTIVITIES

Activity 1: Strategic acquisition of fee title lands in the greater Twin Cities Metro Area **Budget:** \$ 500,000

Acquire land in fee title and convey it into public ownership for stewardship and protection. Following is a list of the lands that may be acquired in part with funding from this request. TPL will work with the long-term steward to ensure a restoration and management plan is developed and that funding is identified for long-term stewardship.

Unique/Once-in-a-lifetime Opportunities

Savage Fen SNA additions: A significant amount of land has become available for acquisition and at possibly half of its pre-economic downturn value. Acquired land would provide protection to existing Scientific and Natural Area lands as well as to currently unprotected sugar maple-basswood forests, seepage meadow, fen, and alkaline seeps and spring—all within the Minnesota River Valley. Acquisition will also entail provision of a multi-use trail through an existing disturbed corridor. Signage will be placed along corridor to educate the public about the unique landforms found here and about the cultural history of the area. Protection is supported through local and regional plans.

Lindstrom Natural Area: In southern Chisago County, TPL is working with the City of Lindstrom and multiple landowners to protect lakeshore and high quality forested lands designated by the DNR as "regionally significant ecological areas." This is the second and last phase of an effort that has been

made possible by the down economy and which includes protection of 5,497 feet of lakeshore and habitat for species in greatest need of conservation such as red shouldered hawk, bald eagle, and Blanding’s turtles. Protection is supported in local, regional, and state plans.

Rum River-Boy Scouts: In west-central Anoka County, TPL is working with the landowners and the City of Ramsey to protect a 160+ acre patch of regionally significant ecological lands including river shoreline, wetlands, forests and prairie habitat. Acquisition would provide protection of these resources as well as access to the Wild and Scenic Rum River, which is also a state designated canoe route.

Building on Past Accomplishments

St. Croix Valley (Franconia- Scandia SNA): TPL is building on its past successful acquisitions with the DNR’s Scientific and Natural Areas Program to protect more critical habitat in this important ecological corridor as defined by DNR’s Division of Ecological Services. Acquisitions will be targeted toward lands of high biodiversity significance and to sensitive ravines that impact the water quality leading into the St. Croix National Scenic Riverway. Protection here is supported by local, state, and federal plans.

Pike Lake II: Building on its past successful acquisition of 30 acres for a natural area, TPL is again working with the City of Prior Lake to acquire land to extend this habitat corridor along the shoreline of pristine Pike Lake. Acquisition of this land is critical for protecting wildlife (including nesting bald eagles), for protecting water quality, and for providing the public an opportunity to enjoy nature nearby in this rapidly growing area of the metro.

| Outcome | Completion Date |
|--|-----------------|
| 1. Approx. 30 acres of high quality habitat and 0.3 miles of shoreline protected through fee title acquisition | 6/30/2013 |

III. PROJECT STRATEGY

A. Project Team/Partners

This proposal is part of the Metro Conservation Corridors Partnership, which is an effort among 10 non-profit conservation organizations and public agencies to target limited resources to shared priorities (i.e. within scientifically determined conservation corridors) within the metro area. Further, the Partnership aims to coordinate on provision of a full range of conservation tools and expertise where needed, including fee acquisition, easement acquisition, and restoration & enhancement activities.

In addition to partnering with the core Metro Conservation Corridor organizations, TPL will partner with towns, townships, SWCDs, Watershed Districts, lakeshore associations, citizen groups etc. in order to accomplish the outcomes stated above. TPL will work closely with the private landowner and public agency to which TPL will transfer the land and which will serve as the long-term steward of the land TPL purchases using ENRTF funds. When TPL transfers interests in land to a long-term steward, TPL will donate to the land steward the land value of the ENRTF funds.

B. Timeline Requirements

2 Years, until June 30, 2013.

C. Long-Term Strategy and Future Funding Needs

This proposal is a component of a larger and longer-term effort of the Metro Conservation Corridors Partnership, begun in 2003, to accelerate the protection and restoration of critical habitat in the broader Twin Cities Metropolitan Area, a 16-county area that is expanding with the result of land and water habitat fragmentation, degradation, loss and and permanent conversion to urban uses. MeCC will continue its work as long as critical habitat that needs to be protected remains unprotected and in danger of degradation and loss.

2011-2012 Detailed Project Budget

IV. TOTAL TRUST FUND REQUEST BUDGET two years

| <u>BUDGET ITEM</u> | <u>AMOUNT</u> |
|---|-------------------|
| Acquisition (Fee Title or Permanent Easements): Funds will be used to purchase approximately 30 acres of high quality habitat and 0.3 miles of shoreline in fee title in the greater Twin Cities Metro Area. The land will be transferred to a local, state, or federal agency for permanent stewardship. Please see attached land acquisition list for more details | \$ 490,000 |
| DNR acquisition costs | 5,000 |
| Baseline report, management plan, initial site development plan | 5,000 |
| TOTAL ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES TRUST FUND \$ REQUEST | \$ 500,000 |

V. OTHER FUNDS

| <u>SOURCE OF FUNDS</u> | <u>AMOUNT</u> | <u>Status</u> |
|---|---------------|------------------|
| Other Non-State \$ Being Applied to Project During Project Period: Various local, federal, and private funds | \$ 250,000 | <i>Pending</i> |
| Other State \$ Being Applied to Project During Project Period: Various bonding, and/or Clean Water, Land, and Legacy funds | \$ 250,000 | <i>Pending</i> |
| Remaining \$ from Current ENRTF Appropriation (if applicable): | | |
| 2009 Metro Conservation Corridors (\$380,000 appropriated) | \$ 380,000 | <i>Spent</i> |
| 2010 Metro Conservation Corridors (\$890,000 appropriated) | \$ 338,000 | <i>Spent</i> |
| | \$ 552,000 | <i>Committed</i> |
| Funding History: | | |
| 2005: \$620,000 ETF + \$1,664,000 other funds | \$ 2,284,000 | Spent |
| 2007: \$420,000 ETF + \$2,320,000 other funds | \$ 2,740,000 | Spent |
| 2008: \$475,000 ETF + \$2,215,000 other funds | \$ 2,690,000 | Spent |
| 2009: \$380,000 ETF + \$992,000 other funds | \$ 1,372,000 | Spent |

2011-2012 Acquisition List for Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund Proposal

Project Title: TPL's Critical Lands Protection Program

Project Manager Name: Becca Nash

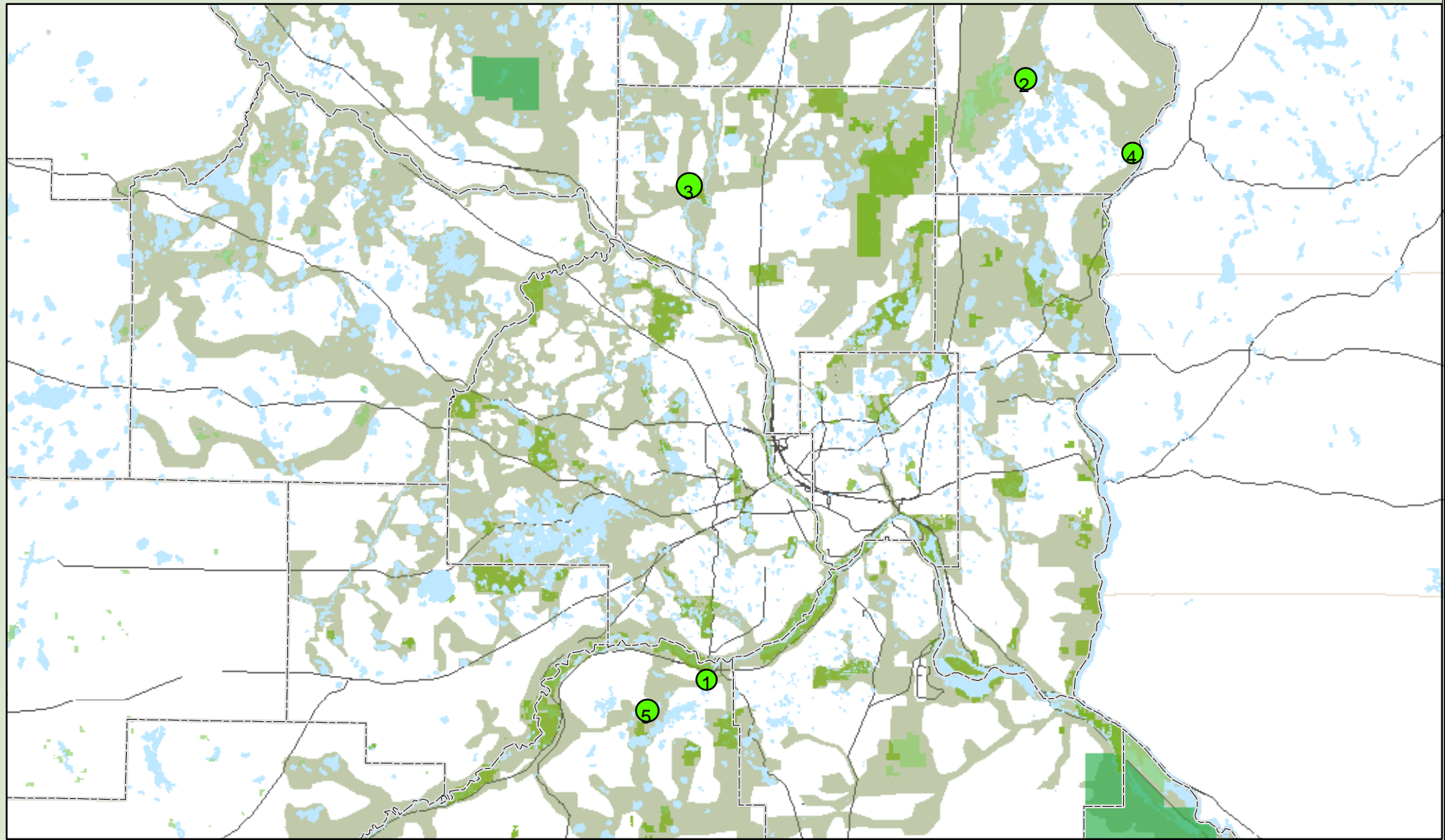
Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund \$ Request: \$500,000

Final Title Holder(s): Various, including SNA, City of Lindstrom, City of Ramsey, National Park Service, and the City of Prior Lake

| # | Parcel Name | Acquisition Type (Fee-Title OR Conservation Easement) | County | Estimated # of Acres | Geographical Coordinates (Provide Latitude/Longitude OR UTM-X/UTM-Y) | | | | Status |
|-----------------|--------------------------|--|---------|-------------------------|---|------------|-------|-------|---------------------------------------|
| | | | | | Latitude | Longitude | UTM-X | UTM-Y | |
| 1 | Savage Fen SNA additions | Fee title | Scott | 3.75 | 44 46'2 N | 93 22'6. W | | | Negotiations with landowner underway |
| 2 | Lindstrom Natural Area | Fee title | Chisago | 5 | 45 24'10. N | 92 49'56.W | | | Negotiations with landowners underway |
| 3 | Rum River-Boy Scouts | Fee title | Anoka | 8 | 45 17'24. N | 93 22'30.W | | | Potential Project |
| 4 | Franconia-Scandia SNA | Fee title | Chisago | 7.5 | 45 20'14. N | 92 42'36.W | | | Potential Project |
| 5 | Pike Lake II | Fee title | Scott | 6.25 | 44 45'9. N | 93 25'51.W | | | Potential Project |
| Estimated Total | | | | 30.5 | | | | | |







NOTES:

| Parcel Name | Final title holder |
|--------------------------|--------------------|
| Savage Fen SNA additions | DNR- SNA |
| Lindstrom Natural Area | City of Lindstrom |
| Rum River-Boy Scouts | City of Ramsey |
| Franconia-Scandia SNA | DNR- SNA |
| Pike Lake II | City of Prior Lake |



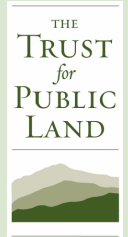
TPL's Critical Land Protection Program- MeCC VI 2011 Focus Areas

Legend

-  County Boundary
-  Metro_Parks
-  Wildlife Management Areas
-  Scientific and Natural Areas
-  NWR_NFWS
-  Metro Conservation Corridors

- (1) Savage Fen SNA Additions
- (2) Lindstrom Natural Area
- (3) Rum River- Boy Scouts
- (4) Franconia Scandia SNA
- (5) Pike Lake II

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Becca Nash

Becca Nash, Project Manager with The Trust for Public Land, leads conservation real estate and conservation finance work throughout the state of Minnesota. She manages all aspects of real estate transactions including initial research and outreach; negotiating contracts; advocating for and securing financing; and coordinating due diligence work. Prior to her work at TPL, Becca coordinated studies funded by the EPA for the University of Minnesota School of Public Health. She has a B.S. in biology from the University of Minnesota College of Biological Sciences.

