

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

Subd: 04i

Project Title: Metropolitan Conservation Corridors (MeCC) - Phase VI

Category: D. Land Acquisition for Habitat and Recreation

Total Project Budget: \$ 3,475,000

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

Other Non-State Funds (secured): \$ 1,205,000

Summary:

Protect and restore a connected network of critical habitat in the greater metropolitan area by acquiring fee title and conservation easements on 650 acres and restoring and enhancing 761 acres.

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Sponsoring Organization: Minnesota Land Trust

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Location:

Region: Metro

Ecological Section: Paleozoic Plateau (222L), 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:

Result / Activity	Partner	Proposed Project Funding				Proposed Accomplishments				Total Project Acres Completed <i>(ENRTF & Other Funds combined)</i>	Areas of Focus				
		ENRTF Funds		Other Funds		ENRTF		Other Funds							
		ENRTF Funds Requested	Other State Funding Proposed	Other Non-State Funding Proposed	Total Project Funds Proposed <i>(ENRTF, Other State Funds & Non-State Funds combined)</i>	ENRTF Acres/Miles Proposed		Other Funds Acres/Miles Proposed							
		ACRES	MILES	ACRES	MILES										
1. Coordinate MeCC Program															
1.1. MeCC Partnership coordination, mapping, and outreach	Led by Minnesota Land Trust	\$20,000	\$0	\$0	\$20,000	-	-	-	-	-	N/A				
1.2. MeCC Mapping and database work	Led by DNR	\$20,000	\$0	\$0	\$20,000	-	-	-	-	-	N/A				
SUBTOTAL		\$40,000	\$0	\$0	\$40,000	0	0.00	0	0.00	-					
2. Restore & Enhancement Significant Habitat															
2.1. Restore and enhance significant watershed habitat	Friends of the Mississippi River	\$200,000	\$0	\$100,000	\$300,000	158	0	0	0	158	Mississippi - SNA and WMA lands				
2.3. Restoring our lands and waters	Great River Greening	\$400,000	-	\$400,000	\$800,000	123	0.18	147	0.14	270	Mississippi River; Wild & Scenic Rivers; Pilot Knob; Scott Co.; Washington Co.; Urban Core				
2.6. Restore and enhance remnant oak savannas and native prairie on the Minnesota	MN Valley NWR Trust, Inc.	\$100,000	\$0	\$50,000	\$150,000	405	0	0	0	405	MN Valley NWR Units in Hennepin, Scott, and Sibley counties				
2.7. Lakeshore and riparian restoration in Dakota County	Dakota County	\$136,000	\$0	\$0	\$136,000	75	0	0	0	75	Vermillion River, Cannon River, Marcott Lake, Lake Marion				
SUBTOTAL		\$836,000	\$0	\$550,000	\$1,386,000	761	0.00	147	0.00	908					
3. Acquire Significant Habitat															
						Fee Title	Easement	Fee Title	Easement	Fee Title	Easement	Fee Title	Easement		
3.1. Critical land protection program	The Trust for Public Land	\$500,000	\$250,000	\$250,000	\$1,000,000	30	-	0.30	-	30	-	0.30	-	60	Savage Fen, Lindstrom, Rum River, St. Croix, Prior Lake
3.2. Protecting significant habitat by acquiring conservation easements.	Minnesota Land Trust	\$400,000	\$0	\$500,000	\$900,000	-	150	-	0.00	-	N/A	-	0.00	150	Rum River, Valley Creek, St. Croix, Cannon River
3.3. Expand the Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge.	MN Valley NWR Trust, Inc.	\$500,000	\$0	\$500,000	\$1,000,000	125	-	0.00	-	125	-	0.00	-	250	MN Valley NWR units in Carver, Scott and/or Sibley Counties
3.5. DNR Fish & Wildlife Acquisition.	DNR - Fisheries & Wildlife	\$300,000	\$0	\$150,000	\$450,000	35	-	0.60	-	15	-	0.30	-	50	Browns Creek, Vermillion River
3.7. Dakota County lakeshore and riparian protection	Dakota County	\$899,000	\$0	\$1,035,000	\$1,934,000	-	310	-	0.00	-	0	-	0.00	310	Vermillion River, Cannon River, Marcott Lake, Lake Marion
SUBTOTAL		\$2,599,000	\$250,000	\$2,435,000	\$5,284,000	190	460	0.90	0.00	170	0	0.60	0.00	820	
4. Community Conservation Assistance															
4.1. Assist local governments to promote the conservation of natural habitats	DNR - CCA (formally Metro Greenways)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	N/A
TOTAL		\$3,475,000	\$250,000	\$2,985,000	\$6,710,000	1,411	0.90	317	0.60	1,728					

Metro Conservation Corridors - Phase VI (2011-2012)									Date: 11/3/10						
Summary of Proposed Allocations and Accomplishments by Partners									ENRTF Dollars Requested: \$3,475,000						
Partner	Proposed Project Funding								Proposed Accomplishments				Activity	Areas of Focus	
	ENRTF Funds				Other Funds				ENRTF		Other Funds				Total Project Acres Completed (ENRTF & Other Funds combined)
	Coordination & Mapping	Restoration	Fee Title Acquisition	Conservation Easement Acquisition	Total ENRTF Funds Requested	Other State Funding Proposed	Other Non-State Funding Proposed	Total Project Funds Proposed (ENRTF, Other State Funds & Non-State Funds combined)	ENRTF Acres/Miles Proposed	Other Funds Acres/Miles Proposed					
ACRES		MILES		ACRES		MILES									
DNR	\$20,000		\$300,000		\$320,000	\$0	\$150,000	\$470,000	35	0.60	15	0.30	50	Mapping and database work and DNR Fish and Wildlife acquisition	Browns Creek, Vermillion River
Friends of the Mississippi River		\$200,000			\$200,000		\$100,000	\$300,000	158				158	Restore and enhance significant watershed habitat	Mississippi - SNA and WMA lands
Great River Greening		\$400,000			\$400,000		\$400,000	\$800,000	123	0.18	147	0.14	270	Restoration of lands and waters	Mississippi River; Wild & Scenic Rivers; Pilot Knob; Scott Co.; Washington Co.; Urban Core
MN Valley NWR Trust, Inc.		\$100,000	\$500,000		\$600,000		\$550,000	\$1,150,000	530		125		655	Expand the MN Valley National Wildlife Refuge and restore/enhance remnant oak savannas and native prairie on the Refuge	MN Valley NWR Units in Hennepin, Scott, and Sibley counties
The Trust for Public Land			\$500,000		\$500,000	\$250,000	\$250,000	\$1,000,000	30	0.30	30	0.30	60	Critical land protection (fee acquisition)	Savage Fen, Lindstrom, Rum River, St. Croix, Prior Lake
Minnesota Land Trust	\$20,000			\$400,000	\$420,000		\$500,000	\$920,000	150				150	MeCC Coordination and protecting habitat by acquiring conservation easements	Rum River, Valley Creek, St. Croix, Cannon River
Dakota County		\$136,000		\$899,000	\$1,035,000		\$1,035,000	\$2,070,000	385				385	Lakeshore and riparian protection (conservation easements) and restoration	Vermillion River, Cannon River, Marcott Lake, Lake
	\$40,000	\$836,000	\$1,300,000	\$1,299,000	\$3,475,000	\$250,000	\$2,985,000	\$6,710,000	1,411	1.08	317	0.74	1,728		

2011-2012 MAIN PROPOSAL

PROJECT TITLE: Metropolitan Conservation Corridors (MeCC) Phase VI Overall Summary

I. PROJECT STATEMENT

The Metro Conservation Corridors (MeCC) Partnership accelerates protection and restoration of remaining high-quality natural lands in the greater Twin Cities metropolitan area by strategically coordinating and focusing conservation efforts within a connected network of critical lands. This corridor network stretches from the area's urban core to its rural perimeter, including portions of 16 counties.

Our projects and activities take place within science-based corridors and are guided by the Minnesota Statewide Conservation and Preservation Plan, Minnesota's Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy, as well as numerous local and resource-specific plans. This project addresses several recommendations of the Statewide Conservation and Preservation Plan:

- Protect priority land habitats
- Protect critical shorelands of streams and lakes
- Restore land, wetlands, and wetland-associated watersheds
- Improve connectivity and access to outdoor recreation

Specifically, during this sixth phase of the MeCC Partnership, our focus will be on projects that build upon prior investments to enlarge habitat areas and create connections as well as projects that capitalize on urgent and unique opportunities. Our goal is to permanently protect 650 acres through fee title and conservation easement acquisition and to restore and/or enhance 761 acres of habitat. By achieving our goals, we expect the following outcomes:

- Strengthen and protect biodiversity in the region
- Protect and improve water quality of our region's lakes, rivers, and streams
- Protect and enhance habitat for a vast variety of wildlife and rare plant species, including "species in greatest conservation need"

The MeCC Partnership maximizes dollars available for conservation by building upon past efforts and investments, leveraging other private and public resources, and engaging in strategic cooperation. The Partnership has an excellent track record. Since 2003, Metro Corridors partners have protected more than 7,200 acres and restored more than 6,000 acres of priority lands in the greater Twin Cities metro area.

II. DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT ACTIVITIES

Activity 1: Partnership Coordination, Mapping, and Database Management **Budget:** \$40,000

The Minnesota Land Trust will provide coordination and leadership by convening and facilitating meetings, providing support to partners, compiling overall reports and accomplishments, and guiding strategic outreach and implementation efforts. DNR Management Information Services (MIS) staff will provide management of and updates to the GIS-based database developed to track MeCC projects as well as mapping needs of the partnership.

Outcome	Completion Date
1. Convene and facilitate quarterly meetings of the partnership to share information and coordinate work (MLT)	June 30, 2013
2. Compile and submit overall partnership reports twice yearly (MLT)	June 30, 2013
3. Conduct outreach to local communities and landowners with number of	June 30, 2013

activities and target audiences to be determined through MeCC evaluation	
4. Maintain current records of accomplishments in the database (DNR)	June 30, 2013

Activity 2: Restore and Enhance Significant Habitat Budget: \$ 836,000

Restoration and enhancement of critical prairie, forest, and other habitats or major landscape connections. All projects will be within scientifically determined corridors in the greater metropolitan area and strategically focused to build upon prior investments or take advantage of unique and urgent opportunities. See individual proposals for additional details.

Outcome	Completion Date
1. Restore and/or enhance 761 acres of critical habitat	June 30, 2013

Activity 3: Acquire Significant Habitat Budget: \$2,599,000

Acquisition of fee title or conservation easements to protect critical habitats or major landscape connections within scientifically determined corridors in the greater metropolitan area. Projects will be strategically focused to build upon prior investments or take advantage of unique urgent opportunities. See individual proposals for additional details.

Outcome	Completion Date
1. Protect 190 acres of critical habitat through fee title acquisition	June 30, 2013
2. Protect 460 acres through conservation easements	June 30, 2013

III. PROJECT STRATEGY

A. Project Team/Partners

Trust for Public Land	Critical Land Protection Program - Acquisition
MN Land Trust	Protect Significant Habitat by Acquiring Conservation Easements
Friends of the Mississippi River	Restore & Enhance Significant Watershed Habitat
MN Valley Nat. Wildlife Refuge Trust	Priority Expansion & Restoration of MN Valley NW Refuge
Great River Greening	Restoring our Lands and Waters
DNR Fish and Wildlife	DNR Aquatic Management Area Acquisition
Dakota County	Lakeshore & Riparian Protection & Restoration
DNR Management Information Serv.	Partnership Mapping and Database
DNR Community Conservation Assist.	Not part of this funding request
DNR SNA Program	Not part of this funding request
Friends of the Minnesota Valley	No current request

B. Timeline Requirements

This project is proposed as two-years of the ongoing Metro Conservation Corridors program. We anticipate work being completed between July 1, 2011 and June 30, 2013.

C. Long-Term Strategy and Future Funding Needs

This project advances the long-term strategy of the Metro Conservation Corridors, initiated in partnership with the LCCMR in 2003 to accelerate the protection and restoration of critical habitat in the greater Twin Cities metropolitan area. Progress towards this long-term strategy is ongoing, and MeCC will continue its work as long as urbanization and fragmentation continue to threaten critical habitat. Additionally, the MeCC Partnership currently is conducting an evaluation to review past accomplishments, highlight strengths and weaknesses of the Partnership, and provide ideas for future focus and strategy. We anticipate completing this project this year, and results will be incorporated into MeCC's future conservation work.

2011-2012 Detailed Project Budget

MeCC Overall Budget

IV. TOTAL TRUST FUND REQUEST BUDGET 2 years

<u>BUDGET ITEM</u>	<u>AMOUNT</u>
Personnel: Staff to manage and coordinate MeCC and manage mapping and database for 2 years. Other partner conservation staff salary and related benefits - please see Overall Table B and individual budgets for additional detail.	\$ 428,960
Contracts: Restoration, Professional Services - please see Overall Table B individual budgets for additional detail.	\$ 376,000
Equipment/Tools/Supplies: Restoration plant materials and supplies. Please see Overall Table B and individual budgets for additional detail.	\$ 12,640
Acquisition (Fee Title or Permanent Easements): Funds to purchase fee title and conservation easements and related transaction expenses. Please see Overall Table B and individual budgets for additional detail.	\$ 2,301,000
Restoration: Restoration supplies and vendors. Please see Overall Table B and individual budgets for additional detail.	\$ 257,100
Travel: Mileage and related travel expenses in Minnesota.	\$ 9,300
Additional Budget Items: Conservation Easement Monitoring, Management, and Enforcement Fund, signs, parking to ensure sites meet DNR minimum maintenance standards, volunteer event supplies. Please see Overall Table B and individual budgets for additional detail.	\$ 90,000
TOTAL ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES TRUST FUND \$ REQUEST	\$ 3,475,000

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 non-state sources. See individual proposals for details.	\$ 2,985,000	Pending and Secured
Other State \$ Being Applied to Project During Project Period: Bonding and/or Clean Water, Land, and Legacy Funds. See individual proposals for details.	\$ 250,000	Pending
In-kind Services During Project Period: Volunteer labor, Dakota County. See individual proposals for details.	\$ 175,000	
Remaining \$ from Current ENRTF Appropriation (if applicable): MeCC 2009: \$2,049,573 remaining unspent but the majority of this amount is committed to specific projects. This amount also includes partners that are not part of this current request. Dakota County: \$509,965 remaining unspent. Please see individual proposal budgets for additional detail.	\$2,049,573	Unspent but some of this amount is committed
Funding History: MeCC 2005: \$3,260,000; 2007: \$2,435,000; 2008: \$3,150,000; 2009: \$3,375,000; 2010: \$1,800,000	\$ 14,020,000	

Metro Conservation Corridors - Phase VI
Table B: LCCMR Funding Request - Budget Detail

Date: 11/8/10
ENRTF Requested Dollars: \$3,475,000




Activity	Partners	ENRTF Funding Proposed								Budget Explanation (staff/contractservices, development, equipment, other)	
		Staff/contract services	Equipm't/ Supplies	Travel	Restoration	Acquisition		Other	Total		
						Fee	Easement				
1. Coordinate MeCC Program											
1.1. Coordination of MeCC program for two year project term	Minnesota Land Trust	\$ 20,000								\$ 20,000	Staff to manage and coordinate the program for two years
1.2. MeCC database and mapping work	DNR MIS	\$ 20,000								\$ 20,000	Staff to manage mapping and database for two years
SUBTOTAL		\$ 40,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 40,000	
2. Restore & Enhance Significant Habitat											
2.1. Restore/enhance significant watershed habitat	Friends of the Mississippi River	\$ 28,960	\$ 2,640	\$ 1,300	\$ 167,100					\$ 200,000	Staff: Conservation Director, Ecologist/Project Manager, Volunteer Coordinator, Stewardship Coordinator. Equipment/Supplies:plants, gloves, weeders, seed collection bags. Travel: Mileage within Minnesota; Restoration: Vendors will be hired to conduct restoration activities.
2.3. Restoring our lands and waters	Great River Greening	\$ 300,000	\$ -	\$ 5,000	\$ 90,000			\$ 5,000		\$ 400,000	Staff/Contracts: Staff ecologists, field crew, volunteer coordinator, and admin (2.5 FTE for 2 years)=\$220,000 and contracts for site prep, prairie installation, etc.= \$80,000; Travel: travel to/from project sites; Restoration: restoration supplies, materials and fees including mulch, plans, seeds, etc.; Other: \$5,000 for volunteer event expenses.
2.6 Oak savanna and prairie restoration on the Minnesota Valley NWR	MN Valley NWR Trust, Inc.	\$ 90,000	\$ 10,000							\$ 100,000	Contracts: Contracts with private restoration or other businesses to perform prescribed fire operations and invasive tree and other woody species removal. Contract with MCC for herbicide application following the mechanical invasive woody species removal. Supplies: Herbicide for treatment of invasive trees and other woody species.
2.7. Dakota County lakeshore and riparian restoration	Dakota County	\$ 136,000								\$ 136,000	Contracts: \$36,000 for natural resource specialist to develop and implement natural resource management plans for all easement projects. \$100,000 for contracts to restore 75 acres.
SUBTOTAL		\$ 554,960	\$ 12,640	\$ 6,300	\$ 257,100	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 5,000	\$ -	\$ 836,000	
3. Acquire Significant Habitat											
3.1 Critical Land Protection Program fee title & conservation easement acquisition	The Trust for Public Land	\$ 5,000				\$ 490,000		\$ 5,000		\$ 500,000	Staff/Contracts: DNR professional services related to real estate transaction; Acquisition: funds to purchase 30 acres in fee title. The land will be transferred to a local, state, or federal agency for permanent stewardship; Other: baseline, management plan & initial site development plan.
3.2. Protecting significant habitat by acquiring conservation easements	Minnesota Land Trust	\$ 140,000		\$ 3,000			\$ 182,000	\$ 75,000		\$ 400,000	Staff/Contracts: Staff expenses including salaries, benefits for approximately 1 FTE for 2 years. Travel: Mileage and related travel in Minnesota; Acquisition: purchase price of conservation easements and related transaction expenses for 150 acres; Other: \$75,000 for easement monitoring, management, and enforcement.
3.3. Fee acquisition for Mn Valley National Wildlife Refuge	MN Valley NWR Trust, Inc.					\$ 500,000				\$ 500,000	Fee title acquisition of 125 acres for priority expansion of the MN Valley NW Refuge.
3.5. DNR Fish & Wildlife Acquisition	DNR - Fisheries & Wildlife	\$ 20,000				\$ 275,000		\$ 5,000		\$ 300,000	Staff/contracts: professional services related to real estate transaction including legal services, surveys, negotiations, closings, etc.; Acquisition: acquisition of fee title (permanent easement if fee title not possible) on 35 acres; Other: signs, parking, etc. to ensure sites meet minimum maintenance standards.
3.7. Dakota County lakeshore and riparian protection	Dakota County	\$ 45,000					\$ 854,000			\$ 899,000	Contracts: 0.5 of 1 FTE contracted real estate specialist for two years, including salary and benefits. Acquisition: Funds to acquire conservation easements on 310 acres. Marcott Lake and Lake Marion projects could be fee title acquisition.
SUBTOTAL		\$ 210,000	\$ -	\$ 3,000	\$ -	\$ 1,265,000	\$ 1,036,000	\$ 85,000	\$ -	\$ 2,599,000	
TOTAL		\$ 804,960	\$ 12,640	\$ 9,300	\$ 257,100	\$ 1,265,000	\$ 1,036,000	\$ 90,000	\$ -	\$ 3,475,000	

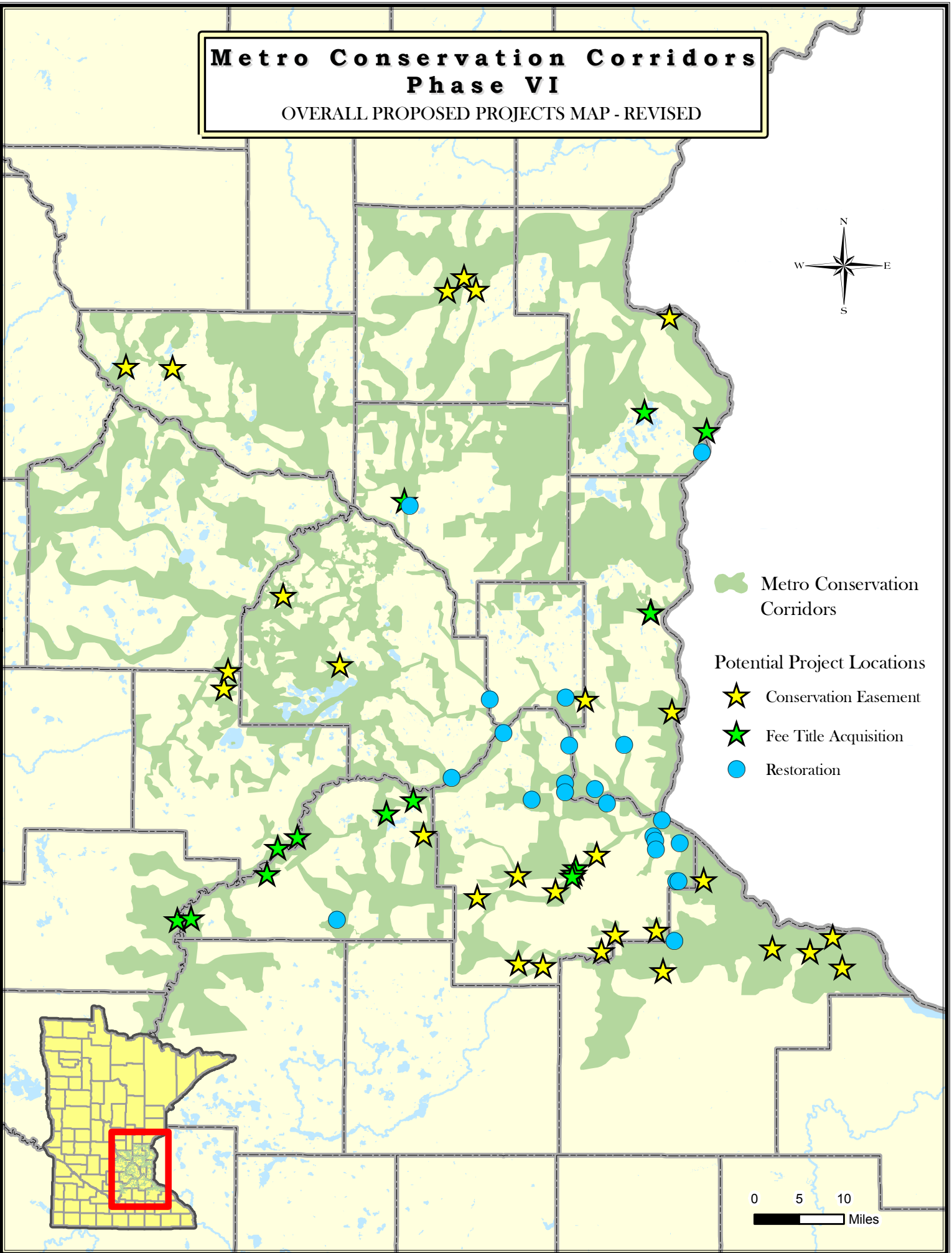
**Metro Conservation Corridors
Phase VI**
OVERALL PROPOSED PROJECTS MAP - REVISED



 Metro Conservation Corridors

Potential Project Locations

-  Conservation Easement
-  Fee Title Acquisition
-  Restoration





Minnesota Land Trust

Our land. Our water. Our future.

Some things should be forever.

Minnesota Land Trust Organizational Overview

The Minnesota Land Trust preserves Minnesota's natural and scenic heritage through public and private partnerships. A 501(c)(3) public charity, the Minnesota Land Trust has been working with landowners and local communities since 1991 through the following three strategies:

- **PROTECT:** Directly protecting land through conservation easements, land acquisition and effective land management.
- **ASSIST:** Providing agencies, communities and organizations with assistance in planning and delivering on-the-ground conservation in order to expand the State's overall capacity.
- **ENGAGE:** Helping to foster a culture of conservation, to support enhanced conservation legislation and funding, and to ensure the state has highly-skilled, trained professionals.

As a statewide land trust, the Minnesota Land Trust has created a regional structure to deliver its programs effectively at a local level, with offices in Duluth, Ely, Red Wing and St. Paul. The Land Trust was one of first land trusts in the country to be accredited by the Land Trust Accreditation Commission and has also been recognized by the Charities Review Council as meeting all of its standards.

The Minnesota Land Trust has provided leadership and coordination for the MeCC Partnership for nearly a year.

Project Partners

The Minnesota Land Trust is joined in this MeCC proposal by the following state and local government programs and non-profit partners:

Trust for Public Land	Critical Land Protection Program - Acquisition
Friends of the Mississippi River	Restore & Enhance Significant Watershed Habitat
MN Valley Nat. Wildlife Refuge Trust	Priority Expansion & Restoration of MN Valley NW Refuge
Great River Greening	Restoring our Lands and Waters
DNR Fish and Wildlife	DNR Aquatic Management Area Acquisition
Dakota County	Lakeshore & Riparian Protection & Restoration
DNR Management Information Serv.	Partnership Mapping and Database

Project Manager Qualifications

The Minnesota Land Trust employs 10 staff, relies on the skills of nearly 100 dedicated volunteers, and is governed by an active 17-member Board of Directors.

Sarah Strommen serves as the Conservation Director for the Land Trust's central region. Sarah joined the Land Trust staff in October 2005 and is responsible for developing and implementing the Land Trust's programs in the eleven-county greater metropolitan area and the counties to the west and north. Prior to joining the Land Trust, Sarah served as the Policy Director for the Friends of the Boundary Waters Wilderness. She also recently served on the State's Clean Water Council and on the City Council for the City of Ramsey, where her duties included being the Council's liaison to the City's Environmental Policy Board and the Lower Rum River WMO. Sarah has a bachelor's degree in Biology from Grinnell College and a master's degree in Environmental Management from Duke University. She also was a Fulbright Scholar in Costa Rica, where she investigated sustainable development and bird conservation.

