

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

Subd: 4j2o

Project Title: 2o - HCP 7 - Prairie Pothole Restoration on Waterfowl Areas

Category: D. Land Acquisition for Habitat and Recreation

Total Project Budget: \$ 75,000

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

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

Summary:

This project restores wetlands in Clay and Becker Counties for the benefit of migratory and endangered species. Restorations will also benefit flood water storage and carbon sequestration.

Name: Greg Hoch

Sponsoring Organization: Friends of the Detroit Lakes Wetland Management Division

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Web Ad:

Location:

Region: NW

Ecological Section: Red River Valley (251A)

County Name: Becker

City / Township:

2011-2012 MAIN PROPOSAL

PROJECT TITLE: Prairie Pothole Restoration on Waterfowl Production Areas

I. PROJECT STATEMENT

The primary mission of the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) is to provide habitat for migratory wildlife species and Federally threatened and endangered species. The purpose of this grant is to restore wetlands that many of these species are dependent on.

This project is part of the Habitat Corridors Partnership. The restoration activities will utilize private/public partnerships to fund critical habitat restorations on public lands, directly complementing existing investments in habitat for wildlife, fish and native plant communities. While the preliminary work will be done by FWS staff, the majority of the work will be done by locally owned private contractors. This effort both stimulates local economies as well as conducts needed habitat restoration work on public lands.

Many Waterfowl Production Areas (WPA) located in the Detroit Lakes Wetland Management District (WMD) have been purchased and the upland habitats have been seeded to local ecotype native grasses and a diverse mix of wildflower species. The next step is to use the Restorable Wetlands Inventory (RWI) to identify drained wetlands on these sites. All of these sites are within the Working Lands Initiative (WLI) priority areas developed by the USFWS's Habitat And Population Evaluation Team (HAPET) office in Fergus Falls MN. By using a combination of datasets and wildlife modeling efforts, we hope to target restoration dollars on the landscape where they will do the most good for all species of grassland and wetland dependent wildlife.

In addition to the primary goal of wildlife habitat, there will be numerous other benefits to these activities. Flooding in the Red River Valley is becoming an annual event. Snowmelt and rainwater stored on these WPAs will be kept out of the ditch and river system during flood events. The water will percolate into the ground, recharging groundwater and aquifers. Since the water will move slowly through this system, natural processes will clean the water of pollutants and filter suspended sediment. Wetlands will also sequester carbon, helping to mitigate climate change.

II. DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT ACTIVITIES

The land affected in this grant has already been purchased and the uplands restored. All restorations in the Detroit Lakes WMD follow specified restoration plans that incorporate strategies from both the state of Minnesota as well as Federal guidelines. USFWS staff will use the RWI in combination with historic aerial photos to identify and delineate wetlands on each site. They will then visit the site to take soil cores at several wetlands at the site. This will allow them to determine how much silt and soil have washed into the wetlands from years of row-cropping and erosion on surrounding areas. Staff will then stake the boundaries of each wetland and inform the contractor how much fill needs to be removed to get to the original soils in the wetland basin. Staff will visit while the contractor is on-site to check their depth estimates.

Contractors that have worked with this office will apply through a competitive bid process. The contractors will do the actual removal of the fill in each wetland. Most wetlands will be connected to a ditch that was originally used to drain them. We will not use a ditch plug. The fill removed from the wetland will be used to completely fill in the length of the ditch. The edges of the ditches will be 'feathered' out to restore as much of the original topography to the site as possible.

Once these activities are completed, the exposed soil will be reseeded by USFWS staff using local ecotype seed harvested from native prairie sites in Becker and Clay County.

Activity 1: Wetland Restoration (Approx 47 acres) Budget: \$ 75,000

Outcome	Completion Date
1. Survey and delineate wetlands (FWS staff)	Dec 2011
2. Remove fill from wetland basins with heavy equipment (contractors)	Nov 2012
3. Fill ditches and restore topography adjacent to former ditches (contractors)	Nov 2012
4. Reseed site using local ecotype seed (FWS staff)	Mar 2013

III. PROJECT STRATEGY

A. Project Team/Partners

The project will be coordinated through the Friends of the Detroit Lakes Wetland Management District. The work will be done through private contractors and USFWS personnel. This project is part of the Habitat Corridors Partnership.

B. Timeline Requirements

We plan to complete this project within the funding cycle of this grant. We have selected multiple sites along a N-S gradient. If conditions are poor (too wet) at one site, we will still be able to work at another site. The number of wetlands and wetland acres at all these sites exceed the capacity of this grant. These dollars will simply continue and be part of an on-going process of wetland restoration in the Detroit Lakes Wetland Management District.

C. Long-Term Strategy and Future Funding Needs

This project is part of long-term ongoing efforts to restore and enhance wildlife habitat in the Wetland Management District. This project continues funding from the previous ENRTF funding cycle on different areas within the District. Previous ENRTF funds have been matched through Federal NAWCA (North American Wetland Conservation Act) grants. If funded, this grant will be matched for its full value with another NAWCA grant this coming October.

2011-2012 Detailed Project Budget

IV. TOTAL TRUST FUND REQUEST BUDGET 2 years

<u>BUDGET ITEM</u>	<u>AMOUNT</u>
Contracts: Contractors not determined for wetland restoration work. Will use contractors listed under IDIQ (Indefinite Delivery, Indefinite Quantity) Contractors will use heavy equipment to remove fill/silt from wetlands that FWS staff have delineated, fill in ditches with this fill, and restore as much of the original microtopography to the site as possible. Seeding on exposed dirt will be done by FWS staff	\$ 75,000
TOTAL ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES TRUST FUND \$ REQUEST	\$ 75,000

V. OTHER FUNDS

<u>SOURCE OF FUNDS</u>	<u>AMOUNT</u>	<u>Status</u>
Other Non-State \$ Being Applied to Project During Project Period: Administrative costs to the Detroit Lakes Wetland Management District Office, as well as delineation and flagging of wetlands and grassland restorations for contractors	\$ 7,000	Secured
Other Non-State \$ Being Applied to Project During Project Period: NAWCA grant this spring will fund identical projects on nearby sites matching previous ENRTF dollars. We will submit another NAWCA grant this coming fall to match the dollars requested in this grant.	\$ 75,000	Secured / Submit Fall 2010
Other State \$ Being Applied to Project During Project Period: The Friends group was funded through the OHC for additional restorations on nearby sites.	\$ 45,000	Secured
In-kind Services During Project Period:	\$ -	
Remaining \$ from Current ENRTF Appropriation (if applicable):	\$ 10,000	Unspent
Funding History, State: ENRTF ML 2008 -\$20,000, ML 2009 - \$50,000, ML 2010 \$45,000 (recommended) / OHC 2010 - 45,000	\$ 160,000	Secured / Recommended
Funding History, Federal: NAWCA 2009 - \$45,000 / NAWCA 2010 - \$75,000 / NAWCA 2011 - \$75,000 (will apply in Oct)	\$ 120,000	Secured

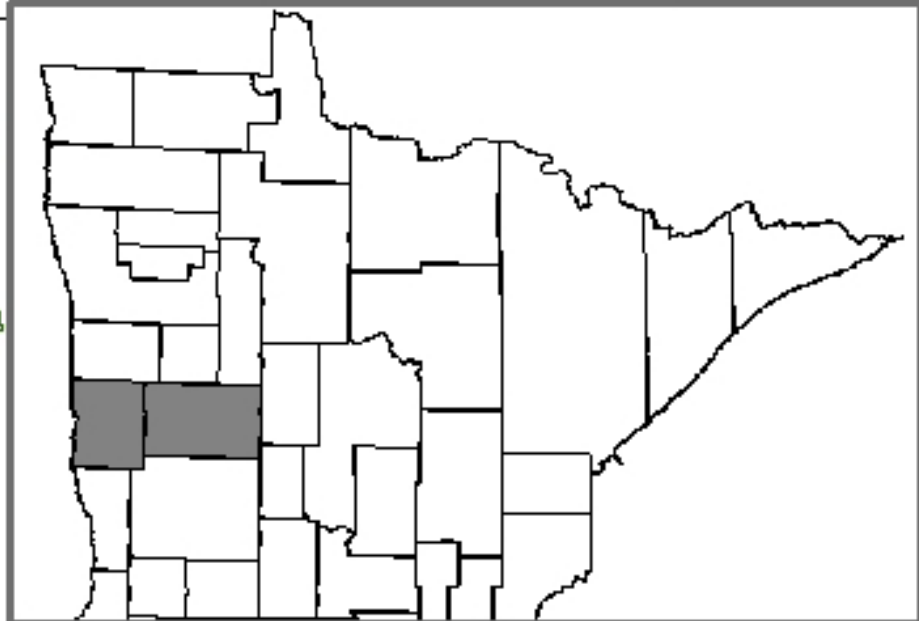
Clay County

Becker County

Seter-Davis WPA

Lake Park WPA

Whiskey Lake WPA



Clay and Becker Counties. Map shows distribution of Waterfowl Production Areas (WPA) in the two counties. The WPAs restored in this project are highlighted and labeled.

Project Manager Qualifications and Organization Description

Project Manager

Greg Hoch is member of the Friends of the Detroit Lakes Wetland Management District (DLWMD). He has a number of on-going research projects with both the DNR and USFWS in Minnesota studying both birds and grassland plant communities. Greg is a member of several state boards/committees including the MN Prairie Chicken Society, Bird Conservation Minnesota, technical cmte for the MN Breeding Bird Atlas, the prairie/ farmland cmte chair for the MN Chapter of The Wildlife Society, and Friends of the DLWMD. He is President of the MN Chapter of The Wildlife Society. He is managing the current LCCMR grant for the Friends group as well as three Heritage Enhancement Grants through the MN Prairie Chicken Society. He has received two DNR Conservation Partnership Grants. He was recently funded for a NAWCA grant through the DLWMD office. This fall he was funded for four grants through the LSOHC small grants program.

Organization Description

The Friends of the Detroit Lakes Wetland Management District is a private non-profit organization. The Friends group is part of a larger network of Friends groups across Minnesota and the United States. The mission of the Friends of the Detroit Lakes WMD is to support the operations and mission of the Detroit Lakes WMD.