

**2013 Project Abstract** For the Period Ending June 30, 2016

**PROJECT TITLE:** Metro Conservation Corridors (MeCC) Phase VII-Friends of the Mississippi River. Protect, Restore and Enhance Significant Watershed Habitat

**PROJECT MANAGER:** Tom Lewanski

**AFFILIATION:** Friends of the Mississippi River

**MAILING ADDRESS:** 360 North Robert Street, Suite 400

**CITY/STATE/ZIP:** St. Paul, MN 55101

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**FUNDING SOURCE:** Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund

**LEGAL CITATION:** M.L. 2013, Chp. 52, Sec. 2, Subd. 04d2.1/3.4

**APPROPRIATION AMOUNT:** \$ 304,000

**Overall Project Outcome and Results**

FMR had three goals for this project: Increase the amount of native habitat, enhance the quality of existing habitat and acquire and permanently protect habitat along the Mississippi River in Maplewood. To approach the first two goals we committed to restoring 10 acres of prairie and enhancing 54-acres of prairie, 10-acres of savanna and 60 acres of forest/woodland for a total of 134 acres improved. We accomplished the goals through the following projects:

- Gelhar-Emrick (Ravenna Twnshp): A 6-acre unit at this property was restored to prairie.
- Pine Bend Bluffs SNA (Inver Grove Heights): A restored prairie and two native bluff prairies were managed for invasive weeds by spot-spraying and burning. Total prairie enhanced: 39
- Old Mill Park (Hastings): This project resulted in 10 acres of enhanced oak savanna.
- Ravenna Block (Ravenna Twnshp): A total of 5 acres of a previously installed prairie was managed for the initial two-year establishment period (mowing, spot-treat weeds). 34 acres of forest were managed for invasive woody plants (cut and stump-treat, fall foliar treatment).
- Spring Lake Park Reserve (Rosemount): Prairie was installed in a 17.5-acre old field.
- Heritage Village Park (Inver Grove Heights) : We controlled invasive weeds and seeded native prairie/savanna species on 2 acres of woodland and 7 acres of savanna.
- Mississippi River Gorge (Minneapolis): 7 acres of woodland were enhanced by controlling invasive woody plants.
- Gateway North Open Space Area (Cottage Grove): 6 acres of woodland were enhanced by controlling woody invasive species.
- River Oaks Park (Cottage Grove): Controlled woody and herbaceous plants on an acre each of prairie and woodland.

Project totals: 23.5 acres of prairie installed/restored and 45 acres of existing prairie, 17 acres of savanna and 50 acres of forest/woodland were enhanced for a total of 135.5 acres of habitat improved.

The third goal was accomplished by acquiring 6 acres of bluffland habitat in the Fish Creek Natural area, Maplewood.

### **Project Results Use and Dissemination**

Information about this project was disseminated in several ways. FMR published articles about the site specific projects in our traditional newsletter and in our electronic newsletter. Articles could also be found on our website. An article about the Fish Creek acquisition appeared in the St. Paul Pioneer Press and in the Minneapolis Star Tribune. We often organize volunteer events for our project sites and we share information with our participants.



# Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund (ENRTF)

## M.L. 2013 Work Plan - Final

**Date of Status Update Report:** October 31, 2016

**Date of Next Status Update Report:** Final Report

**Date of Work Plan Approval:** June 11, 2013

**Project Completion Date:** June 30, 2016

**Is this an amendment request?** yes

**PROJECT TITLE:** Metro Conservation Corridors (MeCC) Phase VII-Friends of the Mississippi River. Protect, Restore and Enhance Significant Watershed Habitat

**Project Manager:** Tom Lewanski

**Affiliation:** Friends of the Mississippi River

**Mailing Address:** 360 North Robert Street, Suite 400

**City/State/Zip Code:** St. Paul, MN 55101

**Telephone Number:** (651) 222-2193

**Email Address:** tlewanski@fmr.org

**Web Address:** www.fmr.org

**Location:** Dakota, Hennepin, Ramsey, & Washington Counties

<b>Total ENRTF Project Budget:</b>	<b>ENRTF Appropriation:</b>	<b>\$304,000</b>
	<b>Amount Spent:</b>	<b>\$303,588</b>
	<b>Balance:</b>	<b>\$412</b>

**Legal Citation:** M.L. 2013, Chp. 52, Sec. 2, Subd. 04d2.1/3.4

### Appropriation Language:

\$2,000,000 the first year is from the trust fund for the acceleration of agency programs and cooperative agreements. Of this appropriation, \$10,000 is to the commissioner of natural resources for agency programs and \$1,990,000 is to the commissioner of natural resources for agreements as follows: \$304,000 with Friends of the Mississippi River; \$368,000 with Dakota County; \$208,000 with Great River Greening; \$310,000 with Minnesota Land Trust; \$400,000 with Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge Trust, Inc.; and \$400,000 with the Trust for Public Land for planning, restoring, and protecting priority natural areas in the metropolitan area, as defined under Minnesota Statutes, section 473.121, subdivision 2, and portions of the surrounding counties, through contracted services, technical assistance, conservation easements, and fee title acquisition. Land acquired with this appropriation must be sufficiently improved to meet at least minimum management standards, as determined by the commissioner of natural resources. Expenditures are limited to the identified project corridor areas as defined in the work plan. This appropriation may not be used for the purchase of habitable residential structures, unless expressly approved in the work plan. 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 plan. Lands that would require payments in lieu of taxes under Minnesota Statutes, section 97A.061 or 477A.12, shall not be acquired with money from this appropriation. Up to \$54,000 is for use by Minnesota Land Trust in a monitoring and enforcement fund as approved in the work plan and subject to subdivision 16. An entity that acquires a conservation easement with appropriations from the trust fund must have a long-term stewardship plan for the easement and a fund established for monitoring and enforcing the agreement. Money appropriated from the trust fund for easement acquisition may be used to establish a monitoring, management, and enforcement fund as approved in the work plan. An annual financial report is required for any monitoring, management, and enforcement fund established, including expenditures from the fund. This appropriation is available until June 30, 2016, by which time the project must be completed and final products delivered.

**I. PROJECT TITLE:** Metro Conservation Corridors (MeCC) Phase VII-Friends of the Mississippi River. Protect, Restore and Enhance Significant Watershed Habitat

**II. PROJECT STATEMENT:**

The Twin Cities Metro Area contains numerous natural areas that provide important wildlife habitat and also serve as crucial components of a larger system of interconnected habitats across the landscape. Due to human influences, these areas have become degraded. Friends of the Mississippi River has been conducting enhancement/restoration and land protection activities on some of the most important and highest quality habitat within the core metro and southeastern metro corridors for 12 years. The restoration, enhancement & protection activities presented in this proposal are designed to continue the work at these sites, ensuring that previous public investment in this habitat improvement is protected, and to expand on these successes by adding new projects sites within the designated corridors. With this funding we can continue the habitat restoration & enhancement in a seamless fashion allowing us to benefit from a project structure that is already in place. In addition, FMR has the opportunity to assist the City of Maplewood in acquiring and permanently protecting 6 acres of habitat in the Fish Creek Natural Area along the bluffs of the Mississippi River.

There are three overall goals for this project: increase the amount of native habitat within specified focus areas of the Metro Conservation Corridors; enhance the quality of existing habitat; and acquire and permanently protect habitat along the Mississippi River in Maplewood. These goals serve to increase the amount of various ecosystems, including those that are rare on the landscapes, such as prairie, and savanna. By removing and controlling exotic invasive plant & in some cases woody species from existing prairie and woodland areas, conditions are improved for native plant species to successfully reproduce and thrive, which in-turn provide food, shelter and nesting sites for various wildlife, including species in greatest need of conservation. Land acquisition in Maplewood consists of 6 acres within the Fish Creek Natural Area. This area is situated along the bluffs of the Mississippi River and is surrounded by open space owned by Ramsey County. Specific activities for each of the goals are described below.

**III. PROJECT STATUS UPDATES:**

**Project Status as of (2/1/2014):** On December 11, 2013, FMR, with the City of Maplewood MN, purchased 6-acres in the Fish Creek Natural area. This acquisition was a part of larger acquisition that totaled 70 acres. In addition, FMR's Senior Ecologist conducted planning activities for restoration efforts at the Old Mill Park in Hastings.

**Project Status as of (8/1/2014):** Heritage Village/Swing Bridge. We conducted spot spraying, a prescribed burn and then overseeded 1-acre hillside prairie, using City of Inver Grove Heights funding. At the Pine Bend Bluffs SNA, we conducted an ecological survey and transplanted sedge plants using match funds. At Old Mill Park we conducted a prescribed burn on 3 acres of oak savanna. At the Spring Lake Park Reserve in Dakota County FMR prepared a seeding site by spraying herbicide, conducting a prescribed burn and grinding stumps on 17 acres.

**Project Status as of (August 20, 2014): Work plan amendment request.** FMR is seeking permission to begin to utilize funds associated with its M.L. 2014 grant before all funds have been spent or contractually encumbered from our ENRTF M.L. 2013 grant. All of the funds from the 2013 grant are allocated and committed to the projects that are on our restoration lists. We have restoration projects on our M.L. 2014 list that are ready for additional activities, which would benefit from efficiencies by being able to conduct these activities now rather than waiting until all of the previously appropriated funds, committed to other sites, are spent. Amendment Request approved by the LCCMR 8/21/2014.

**Project Status as of (2/1/2015): Work plan amendment request.** FMR is seeking permission to amend its budget by moving \$2,800 from the Professional/Technical/Service Contracts line into the Equipment/Tools/Supplies line that is specifically for plant material. Amendment Request approved by the LCCMR 1-29-2015.

During this report period, we conducted enhancement activities on 30 acres of forest/woodland, 9 acres of savanna, and 28.7 acres of prairie. In addition, prairie restoration activities took place on 1.5 acres.

**Project Status as of 8/1/2015):** Restoration activities took place at 6 sites ( Gateway North Open Space Area, Minneapolis Riverfront, Old Mill Park, River Oaks Park, Ravenna Block Greenway, and Spring Lake Park. Most of the activities at these sites were continuation on previously reported acres. However, it did include restoration on 9.5 new acres.

**Project Status as of (10/12/15): Work plan amendment request.** FMR is seeking permission to begin to utilize funds associated with its M.L. 2015 grant before all funds have been spent or contractually encumbered from our ENRTF M.L. 2013 grant. All of the funds from the 2013 grant are allocated and committed to the projects that are on our restoration lists. We have restoration projects on our M.L. 2015 list that are ready for implementation or additional activities, which would benefit from efficiencies by being able to conduct these activities now rather than waiting until all of the previously appropriated funds, committed to other sites, are spent.

**Project Status as of (2/1/2016): Amendment Request.**

FMR is requesting a budget amendment to reduce the amount in the Equipment/Tools/Supplies Restoration supplies line by \$955, increase the budget amount in the Professional/Technical/Service Contracts line by \$400 and increase the Equipment/Tools/Supplies – Trees, shrubs, seed line by \$555. Amendment approved by LCCMR 2/22/16.

Restoration activities took place at 4 sites. At the Old Mill Park in Hastings, the seeded prairie area was mowed twice and exotic brush was retreated to deal with resprouts. This was on previously reported acres. At the Spring Lake Park site, the seeded prairie was mowed. This was on previously reported acres. At the Gateway North Open Space Area in Cottage Grove exotic brush sprouts were treated with herbicide on 6 acres. At the Mississippi River gorge in Minneapolis, exotic brush was cut and treated on 7 acres.

**Project Status as of 8/1/2016): Amendment Request.**

Amendment Request approved by the LCCMR 8/2/2016.

Tom Lewanski spoke with Mike Banker on 7/2/16 about some minor categorical discrepancies in our final budget calculations. FMR is requesting a budget amendment to move funds between budget lines as the project ends. Specifically we are asking to reduce the amount in the Professional/Technical/Service Contracts category by \$636.00, reduce the amount in the Bookkeeper section by \$39.00, increase the amount in Conservation Director section by \$463, increase the amount in the Ecologist section by \$109.00, increase the amount in the travel expenses section by \$16.00 and increase the amount in the Equipment/tools/supplies (plant materials) section by \$87.00. This request is to be retroactive to enable FMR to maximize its reimbursement for legitimate and allowable expenses related to performing the activities of the project at the end of the grant period.

### **Final Report Summary**

The Metro Area contains natural areas that provide important wildlife habitat and serve as crucial components of a larger system of interconnected habitats across the landscape. Human influences have degraded many of them. FMR had three goals for this project: Increase the amount of native habitat, enhance the quality of existing habitat and acquire and permanently protect habitat along the Mississippi River in Maplewood. To approach the first two goals we committed to restoring 10 acres of prairie and enhancing 54-acres of prairie, 10-acres of savanna and 60 acres of forest/woodland for a total of 134 acres improved. We accomplished the goals through the following projects:

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Project totals: 23.5 acres of prairie installed/restored and 45 acres of existing prairie, 17 acres of savanna and 50 acres of forest/woodland were enhanced for a total of 135.5 acres of habitat improved.

The third goal was accomplished by acquiring 6 acres of bluffland habitat in the Fish Creek Natural area, Maplewood.

#### **Project Status as of 10/31/2016): Amendment Request.**

FMR is requesting a budget amendment to move funds between budget lines as the project ends. Specifically we are asking to reduce the amount in the Ecologist category by \$546.00, increase the conservation Director line by \$463.00 and increase the Bookkeeper line by \$83.00. In addition, we are asking to reduce the Professional/Technical/Service Contracts line by \$480.00, increase the Equipment/Tools/Supplies (Trees, shrubs, seed) line by \$464 and increase the Travel line by \$16.00. This request is to be retroactive to enable FMR to maximize its reimbursement for legitimate and allowable expenses related to performing the activities of the project at the end of the grant period.

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#### IV. PROJECT ACTIVITIES AND OUTCOMES:

##### **ACTIVITY 1: Habitat restoration and enhancement**

**Description:** Restoration: We will restore 10 acres of prairie on a fallow field by conducting prescribed burning, herbicide application, soil preparation, and seeding, followed by 2 seasons of mowing.

Enhancement: 54 acres of existing native and restored prairie and 10-acres of native savanna will be enhanced by conducting invasive species control and prescribed burns. In addition, 60 acres of forest/woodland will be enhanced by controlling exotic invasive plants and by planting native trees & shrubs. We will evaluate the effectiveness of all restoration/enhancement actions by conducting periodic site visits to monitor success of management methods including resprouting/germination of exotic plants and survival rate of installed native plants. We will also document breeding bird species at targeted sites. FMR will give consideration to contracting with Conservation Corps Minnesota for some of these restoration and enhancement activities.

Each restoration site will have an ecological restoration plan. These plans will contain site information (location, landscape context, site geology, rare species, historic vegetation, land use, water resources) and ecological evaluation and recommendations (existing land cover, management recommendations, restoration schedule and cost estimates).

An initial evaluation will be completed for each of the restoration & enhancement projects in relationship to the stated goals and standards in the restoration plan and will be a part of the final report. The evaluations will determine whether the restoration projects are meeting planned goals, identify any problems with the implementation of the restorations, and, if necessary, give recommendations on improving restorations. A second evaluation will be completed three years after the completion of the expenditure.

The restoration and enhancement activities that FMR will undertake through this grant will be conducted on lands permanently protected by a conservation easement or in public ownership.

The Mississippi River is the defining natural feature of the central portion of the United States. It provides critical habitat both as an international migration corridor and as essential habitat for local resident wildlife and plant populations. FMR has been strategically focused on specific areas within the designated corridors for well over a decade. This approach has allowed us to stay engaged with projects, landowners, partners and communities, helping to ensure the continuous improvement and expansion of the habitat values at these sites, over time, while protecting the public investment that has been made in them. As such the restoration and enhancement projects presented in this proposal are all part of larger projects both in the sense of time and area. Many times these projects involve restoration and protection components. Because we stay engaged with our conservation projects over the long-term and are on site at least once a year we are able to identify and respond to issues as they emerge. FMR is committed to conducting fundraising from both public and private sources, for the ongoing restoration and enhancement activities required at these sites over time.

FMR will provide a copy of RFP's, sent out to vendors for restoration activities to the Conservation Corps Minnesota.

##### **Summary Budget Information for Activity 1:**

**ENRTF Budget: \$ 142,000**  
**Amount Spent: \$ 141,588**

**Activity Completion Date:**

Outcome	Completion Date	Budget (approx.)
1. Conduct prairie restoration/installation activities on 10 acres.	6/30/2016	\$16,400
2. Conduct habitat enhancement activities on 54 acres of existing prairie	6/30/2016	\$31,300
3. Conduct enhancement activities on 10 acres of savanna	6/30/2016	\$14,450
4. Conduct enhancement activities on 60 acres of forest/woodland.	6/30/2016	\$79,850

**Activity Status as of (2/1/2014):** FMR’s Senior Ecologist conducted planning for the Old Mill Park oak savanna restoration activities.

**Activity Status as of (8/1/2014):** Heritage Village/Swing Bridge. We conducted spot spraying for weeds, a prescribed burn and then overseeded 1-acre hillside prairie, using City of Inver Grove Heights funding. At the Pine Bend Bluffs SNA, we conducted an ecological survey and transplanted sedge plants in oak forest using matching funds. At Old Mill Park we conducted a prescribed burn on 3 acres of oak savanna. At the Spring Lake Park Reserve in Dakota County, FMR prepared a prairie seeding site by spraying herbicide, conducting a prescribed burn and grinding stumps on 17 acres.

**Activity Status as of (2/1/2015):** Almquist: Contractor cut and treated buckthorn on 25 acres of forest. At the Old Mill Park a contractor cut and treated buckthorn on 9 acres of savanna. Also at this site the contractor conducted site preparation (herbicide application and burning) on 1.5 acre in anticipation of seeding with native prairie seed. The seed has been purchased. Pine Bend Bluffs SNA: herbaceous weeds were sprayed and mowed on 16 acres of existing prairie and exotic woody plants and small trees were cut on an additional 12.7 acres of prairie. At the River Oaks Park: Woody plant material was cut and treated on 2 acres of woods. In the Spring Lake Park Reserve site preparation activities (discing, harrowing & spraying continued on previously reported acres. The site was then seeded in October. At the Rock Island Swing bridge in Inver Grove Heights, herbaceous and woody weeds were cut and sprayed on previously reported acres. Overseeding took place on an additional 3 acres at this site.

**Activity Status as of 8/1/2015):** River Oaks: On Feb 12, 2015, exotic woody species (primarily buckthorn), was cut, treated, stacked and burned from a 1-acre part of the site. During the winter of 2014/2015, Minnesota Native Landscapes conducted invasive species removal on the bluff prairie, savanna, oak woodland, and oak forest units. This work also included stacking and burning piles of cut brush. In the bluff prairie, Buckthorn Baggies were applied to the cut stumps to avoid herbicide use on the sensitive prairie area.

Old Mill Park: On April 17, 2015, a prescribed burn was completed on 3 acres as part of site preparation for seeding. The seeding was intended for fall 2014, but by the time conditions were good for seeding, there was too much leaf litter on the ground, necessitating a burn. Suitable weather conditions for burning are more difficult to obtain in the fall, and before a burn could be conducted there was a snowfall.

Ravenna Block/Almquist: On April 23, 2015 a prescribed burn was completed on a 13-acre wooded unit, as follow-up after buckthorn removal the previous year. Burn conditions were good, with low relative humidity and a light breeze. The burn carried well in some areas, but not in the lower (moister) parts of the site. Seedling buckthorn plants were not yet visible, so it is not yet clear if the burn impacted the seedling flush. The prairie reconstruction was supposed to be burned (3<sup>rd</sup> growing season), but due to the dry soils the native grasses were still small so the fuels were light. The decision was made that waiting a year, or until fall, will give better results.

Spring Lake Park: On June 12, 2015 the prairie reconstruction, seeded in fall 2014, was mowed as part of the establishment process.

Minneapolis Riverfront/Ole Olson: FMR has been meeting with the Minneapolis park board (MPRB) to develop our plans at the site. Restoration will begin in August with the removal of woody invasive species and spraying of exotic herbaceous species. The areas will be prepped for seeding, which will occur in the late fall of 2015, and a demonstration prairie planting will be installed as part of a FMR volunteer event



Gateway North Open Space Area (GNOSA): This spring, FMR wrote and distributed an RFP for the Phase I follow-up work at GNOSA. FMR accepted a bid from Prairie Restorations Inc. (PRI) to begin work in the fall of 2015. To date, FMR ecologists have made multiple site visits with staff from PRI to go over the work plan and hash out the logistics of the work. Work will focus on treating exotic woody and herbaceous species in the savanna units.

**Activity Status as of (2/1/2016):**

Rock Island Swing Bridge: FMR ecologists conducted site visits to evaluate the establishment of the 5-acre savanna restoration, as well as the efficacy of the invasive removal on the savanna and slopes of the berm.

36<sup>th</sup> Street Oak Savanna: In early October, crews cut and treated buckthorn and other woody invasive species on 7 acres of forest surrounding the prairie and savanna bowl. Crews removed woody brush on 3.25 of the acres, but left felled brush on the other 3.75 acres for a volunteer brush haul on October 10<sup>th</sup>.

Spring Lake Park: The site was evaluated on July 20, 2015. The prairie reconstruction, seeded in fall 2014, was mostly knee high or less. Typically a mow would not have been needed, but ragweed was starting to bloom, so the second mow of the season was done on July 22, 2015. A site evaluation on October 15 revealed a proliferation of black-eyed Susan's and several other early successional natives.

Old Mill Park: On July 17, 2015, the areas seeded on 4/21 (Units 1 and 3) were mowed, and again on August 13. The site was evaluated on July 30<sup>th</sup> – no natives were seen yet in the seeded areas. Unit 1 was dominated by foxtail, but black medick was much reduced from earlier. A few natives were seen in Unit 3 – black-eyed Susan, bergamot, partridge pea – but vegetation was sparse. By September 1, Unit 1 was still dominated by non-native grasses (mostly annual), but natives were easy to find – purple & white prairie clovers, yellow coneflower, Susies, bergamot, common milkweed, partridge pea and grass seedlings. Similar species were seen in Unit 3, plus blazing star, and Indian grass was abundant. The entry planting looked fantastic all season, with over 90 percent survival of robust plants that all flowered. It hosted numerous monarch butterflies in the fall. On October 20, the resprouted or seedling buckthorn plants in the wooded areas were treated with a foliar herbicide. The site was evaluated on November 2. The buckthorn treatment was apparent, but effectiveness will need to be evaluated in spring 2016. A large patch of thistles and buckthorn was detected, which was treated (herbicide) on November 6.

Gateway North Open Space Area: At GNOSA, crews treated buckthorn seedlings and small stems on 6 acres of savanna (Units Sav-1 and Sav-2). Crews spot-sprayed seedlings and small stems using backpack sprayers. Work was done as follow-up to past buckthorn removal, and will continue with future spot sprays of herbaceous plants and a prescribed burn.

**Activity Status as of 8/1/2016):**

Emrick: 6 acres was prepped (tree removal, herbaceous layer herbicided, prescribed burn) and was seeded with prairie mix.

Minneapolis Gorge: Woody exotic plants were removed on 7 acres of previously reported acres.

Spring Lake Park: A contractor mowed the 17.5 acres of prairie that was installed.

Gateway North Open Space Area: Contractor retreated exotic brush and herbaceous plants on 6 acres of previously reported acres.

**Final Report Summary:**

The Metro Area contains natural areas that provide important wildlife habitat and serve as crucial components of a larger system of interconnected habitats across the landscape. Human influences have degraded many of them. FMR had three goals for this project: Increase the amount of native habitat, enhance the quality of existing habitat and acquire and permanently protect habitat along the Mississippi River in Maplewood. To approach the first two goals we committed to restoring 10 acres of prairie and enhancing 54-acres of prairie, 10-acres of savanna and 60 acres of forest/woodland for a total of 134 acres improved. We accomplished the goals through the following projects:

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- Old Mill Park: This project resulted in 10 acres of enhanced oak savanna.

- Ravenna Block: A total of 5 acres of a previously installed prairie was managed for the initial two-year establishment period (mowing, spot-treat weeds). 34 acres of forest were managed for invasive woody plants (cut and stump-treat, fall foliar treatment).
- Spring Lake Park Reserve: Prairie was installed in a 17.5-acre old field.
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- River Oaks Park. Controlled woody and herbaceous plants on an acre each of prairie and woodland.

This project resulted in 135.5 acres of improved habitat. 85 of those acres were in two very rare habitat types in Minnesota, prairie and oak savanna. Specifically the improved habitat by community type resulted can be summarized in the following way: 23.5 acres of prairie installed/restored and 45 acres of existing prairie, 17 acres of savanna and 50 acres of forest/woodland were enhanced for a total of 135.5 acres of habitat improved.

There were four project sites that were included in our original proposal and project list but did not conduct restoration activities at them during this project. These sites are Minneapolis River Front, Cottage Grove Ravine Regional Park, Wilmar, and Mounds park. In each of these instances, FMR secured other funding to pursue the restoration presented in the natural resource management plans.

**Activity 2: Acquisition at Fish Creek Natural Area**

**Budget: \$162,000**

These ENRTF funds will be used to purchase 6 acres in the Fish Creek Natural Area. This is one phase of a larger acquisition project of City of Maplewood, totaling 70 acres. The City will hold the fee title. A restoration and management plan is currently being prepared. The plan will contain site information ( location, landscape context, site geology, rare species, historic vegetation, land use, water resources) and ecological evaluation and recommendations (existing land cover, management recommendations, restoration schedule and cost estimates). The City will use a mix of funding sources to implement this plan including city capital improvement funds & grants. For ongoing maintenance projects the city will seek funding through city’s operating budget. FMR is also interested in being a long-term partner with the city and bring public and private funding to assist in implementing the plan.

An analysis will be provided by the City of Maplewood to LCCMR and MMB that identifies increased operation and maintenance costs likely to be incurred as a result of the acquisition and how these costs are to be paid.

The land being acquired is identified in a City of Maplewood document entitled Recommendations and Opportunities for Fish Creek Natural Area Greenway. The Fish Creek Natural Area Greenway Ad-Hoc Commission developed criteria to evaluate and prioritize land within this natural area. These criteria are presented on page 15 of this document, which can be viewed at:

<http://www.ci.maplewood.mn.us/DocumentCenter/Home/View/1444>

Written approval will be obtained from the DNR commissioner prior to the acquisition of this property. A copy of this letter will be submitted to the LCCMR.

**Summary Budget Information for Activity 2:**

**ENRTF Budget: \$ 162,000**  
**Amount Spent: \$ 162,000**  
**Balance: \$0**

Outcome	Completion Date	Budget
1. Acquisition of 6 acres.	6/30/2016	\$162,000

**Activity Status as of (2/1/2014):** On December 11, 2013, the City of Maplewood MN, purchased 70 acres in the Fish Creek Natural area. The Conservation Fund purchased the property from the landowner and held it for two years, enabling the City to obtain the funding needed to take ownership of the property. Six of the 70 acres were purchased with funds appropriated to FMR for this project. The project transaction costs, presented in the following table were calculated by prorating the expenses for the transaction covering the entire 70 acre acquisition to the 6 acres purchased with funds from this grant. The City of Maplewood used other, non-state, funding to pay the transaction costs associated with the acquisition of these 6-acres. The Conservation Fund and the City of Maplewood developed an agreement, at the time that the Conservation Fund purchased the property, regarding how much money the city would purchase the property for. A recent appraisal demonstrated that the property had increased in value since this agreement was signed. As a result the Conservation Fund provided a bargain sale of the 6 acres that valued \$32,143.00. A letter from the Conservation Fund, acknowledging this bargain sale for the entire property, has been attached to this report.

The 58 acres purchased that were not part of this grant (70 total acres minus 6 acres purchased with this ENRTF grant & minus 6 acres purchased by the City of Maplewood with non-state funding as match) were acquired with funding from a Natural and Scenic Area grant (source: ENRTF), Ramsey County, Ramsey-Washington Metro Watershed District, City of Maplewood, and private funds.

	<b>ENRTF grant to Friends of the Mississippi River</b>	<b>City of Maplewood</b>	<b>Friends of the Mississippi River</b>	Total	Notes
Land Cost	<b>\$162,000.00</b>		<b>\$857.00</b>	<b>\$162,857.00</b>	FMR used private funds.
Property Taxes		<b>\$6,909.68</b>		<b>\$6,909.68</b>	Determined by prorating the transaction costs associated with the purchase of the entire 70 acres to the 6 acres purchased with this grant. Maplewood used non-state funds for these costs.
Interest		<b>\$12,655.00</b>		<b>\$12,655.00</b>	
Conservation Fund fee		<b>\$4,285.00</b>		<b>\$4,285.00</b>	
Legal		<b>\$500.00</b>		<b>\$500.00</b>	
Settlement charges to borrower		<b>\$632.00</b>		<b>\$632.00</b>	
Appraisal		<b>\$4,500.00</b>		<b>\$4,500.00</b>	Actual expenses for the 6 acres. Maplewood used non-state funds for these costs.
Phase I.		<b>\$3,850.00</b>		<b>\$3,850.00</b>	
<b>Total expenses</b>	<b>\$162,000</b>	<b>\$33,331.68</b>	<b>\$857.00</b>	<b>\$196,188.68</b>	

The City of Maplewood estimated and acknowledge the following Increased operations and maintenance costs associated with the 70 acres, which includes the 6-acres acquired with funds from this grant:

1. Initial vegetation restoration work -- \$275,000, to be funded by grants and City funding.
2. Site access improvements (trail, parking lot, gate, benches, signage) -- \$300,000, to be funded by city capital improvement funding.
3. Archeological investigation and interpretation - \$20,000, to be funded by grants.
4. Estimates for ongoing costs – To be funded by city operations

- Annual: \$2500-\$5000 (trail and parking lot maintenance, vegetation management, educational programs)
- Every 20 years: \$37,500 (trail and parking lot renovation).

**Activity Status as of (8/1/2014):**

**Activity Status as of (2/1/2015):**

**Activity Status as of (8/1/2015):**

**Activity Status as of (2/1/2016):**

**Activity Status as of (8/1/2016):**

**Final Report Summary:** The Fish Creek acquisition took place in December, 2013. FMR was able to secure over \$34,000 in non-state match for this acquisition. This project was a part of a larger acquisition that took place at this time. An additional 64 acres were also acquired at this time using a variety of funding sources. The total acquisition at Fish Creek in December of 2013 was 70 acres.

## V. DISSEMINATION:

**Description:** FMR will disseminate information about the protection, restoration and enhancement activities associated with this grant on the organization's website ([www.fmr.org](http://www.fmr.org)) and in its digital newsletter, which is called Mississippi Messages. We will also attempt to get press coverage of these projects.

**Status as of (2/1/2014):** [http://www.twincities.com/outdoors/ci\\_24773523/maplewood-fish-creek-greenway-funds-secured-trail-building](http://www.twincities.com/outdoors/ci_24773523/maplewood-fish-creek-greenway-funds-secured-trail-building), <http://www.startribune.com/local/east/237169171.html>, <http://www.ci.maplewood.mn.us/index.aspx?NID=891>, [http://www.fmr.org/news/current/fish\\_creek\\_protected-2013-12](http://www.fmr.org/news/current/fish_creek_protected-2013-12), <http://www.ci.maplewood.mn.us/index.aspx?NID=884>

**Status as of (8/1/2014):** No information dissemination took place during this time frame.

**Status as of (2/1/2015):** An article appeared in the Autumn 2014 issue of FMR's newsletter about the Oak savanna restoration at the Old Mill Park in Hastings. An article appeared in the October issue of Mississippi Messages, FMR's electronic newsletter, about the River Oaks Park in Cottage Grove.  
[http://www.fmr.org/news/current/river\\_oaks\\_restoration-2014-10](http://www.fmr.org/news/current/river_oaks_restoration-2014-10)

**Status as of (8/1/2015):** FMR Spring 2015 newsletter article attached.

**Status as of (2/1/2016):** [http://fmr.org/participate/ongoing/gorge\\_stewards](http://fmr.org/participate/ongoing/gorge_stewards)

**Status as of (8/1/2016):**

**Final Report Summary:** There were several articles published about this project over life of the grant. They include the following:

- [http://www.twincities.com/outdoors/ci\\_24773523/maplewood-fish-creek-greenway-funds-secured-trail-building](http://www.twincities.com/outdoors/ci_24773523/maplewood-fish-creek-greenway-funds-secured-trail-building), <http://www.startribune.com/local/east/237169171.html>,

<http://www.ci.maplewood.mn.us/index.aspx?NID=891>,  
[http://www.fmr.org/news/current/fish\\_creek\\_protected-2013-12](http://www.fmr.org/news/current/fish_creek_protected-2013-12),

- <http://www.ci.maplewood.mn.us/index.aspx?NID=884>
- An article appeared in the Autumn 2014 issue of FMR's newsletter about the Oak savanna restoration at the Old Mill Park in Hastings. An article appeared in the October issue of Mississippi Messages, FMR's electronic newsletter, about the River Oaks Park in Cottage Grove.  
[http://www.fmr.org/news/current/river\\_oaks\\_restoration-2014-10](http://www.fmr.org/news/current/river_oaks_restoration-2014-10)
- [http://fmr.org/participate/ongoing/gorge\\_stewards](http://fmr.org/participate/ongoing/gorge_stewards)

In addition, we also shared information about the project and the LCCMR to the many volunteers that assisted us during the restoration at some of the sites.

## VI. PROJECT BUDGET SUMMARY:

### A. ENRTF Budget:

Budget Category	\$ Amount	Explanation
Personnel:	\$ 24,533	
Conservation Director (1).	\$2,663	Project and partner coordination..01 FTE. July 1, 2013 - June 30, 2016.
Ecologist. (2).	\$21,309	Specific restoration/enhancement project planning, coordination, implementation & evaluation. .2 FTE. July 1, 2013 - June 30, 2016.
Bookkeeper (1).	\$561	Bookkeeper.(1). Financial recordkeeping and invoicing. 80% salary, 20% benefits. .006 FTE. July 1, 2013 - June 30, 2016.
Professional/Technical/Service Contracts:	\$110,464	Vendors to provide restoration activities such as prescribed burns, soil prep., seeding, woody and exotic plant removal, herbicide application, etc. (Vendor contracts will be awarded on a competitive and performance basis.)
Equipment/Tools/Supplies:	\$545	Gloves, fencing, posts, misc. supplies
Fee Title Acquisition:	\$162,000	Acquire 6 acres in the Fish Creek Natural Area in Maplewood, Ramsey County.
Travel Expenses in MN:	\$1,016	Travel to project sites and partner meetings.
Other: Plant material:	\$5,442	Native seeds, trees & shrubs
<b>TOTAL ENRTF BUDGET:</b>	<b>\$304,000</b>	

**Explanation of Use of Classified Staff:**

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

**Number of Full-time Equivalent (FTE) funded with this ENRTF appropriation: .21 FTE**

**Number of Full-time Equivalent (FTE) estimated to be funded through contracts with this ENRTF appropriation: .4 (estimate)**

### B. Other Funds:

Source of Funds	\$ Amount Proposed	\$ Amount Spent	Use of Other Funds
Non-state			

City of Maplewood	\$162,000	\$162,000	City of Maplewood purchased an additional 6 acres using non-state funding as match for this ENRTF grant
City of Maplewood	-	\$33,331.68	Transaction expenses for the 6-acres acquired with ENRTF grant in the Fish Creek .
Friends of the Mississippi River	\$ 10,000	\$2,819.59	Restoration/enhancement/acquisition
Dakota County	\$2,000	\$790.	Restoration/enhancement
Minneapolis Park Board	\$2,000	\$	Restoration/enhancement
Watershed Districts	\$4,000	\$	Restoration/enhancement
Ramsey-Washington Metro Watershed District	0	\$175,000	Acquisition of additional land in Fish Creek
City of Inver Grove Heights	0	\$4,760	
Ramsey County	0	\$425,000	Acquisition of additional land in Fish Creek
City of Maplewood	0	\$545,110.32	Acquisition of additional land in Fish Creek
City of Cottage Grove	0	\$936.00	STS – Brush removal
Private		\$228,000	Acquisition of additional land in Fish Creek
<b>State</b>			
Natural & Scenic Area Grant	0	\$500,000	Acquisition of additional land in Fish Creek
Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council. Metro Big Rivers Habitat Phase 3. Fiscal Year 2013.	\$67,000	\$	Restoration/enhancement at Gateway North Open Space Area in Cottage Grove.
<b>TOTAL OTHER FUNDS:</b>	<b>\$247,000</b>	<b>\$2,077,747.27</b>	

## VII. PROJECT STRATEGY:

**A. Project Partners:** City of Maplewood – will receive \$162,000 to acquire 6 acres in the Fish Creek Natural Area. None of the following partners will receive funds from this appropriation other than having restoration/enhancement done on land that they own: Dakota County, Minneapolis Park Board, City of Cottage Grove, Washington County, City of Inver Grove Heights, City of St. Paul, City of Hastings, MN-DNR

**B. Project Impact and Long-term Strategy:** FMR has been strategically focused on specific areas within the designated corridors for over a decade. This has allowed us to stay engaged with projects, landowners, partners and communities, helping to ensure the continuous improvement and expansion of the habitat values at these sites, while protecting the public investment that has been made in them. Starting with individual parcels, our project areas have grown by orders of magnitude to protect and restore large tracts of land, ultimately creating contiguous greenway corridors. The protection, restoration and enhancement projects presented in this work program are all part of larger projects both in the sense of time and area. FMR is committed to conducting fundraising from both public and private sources, for the ongoing restoration and enhancement activities required at these sites over time.

### C. Spending History:

Funding Source	M.L. 2003	M.L. 2005 Or FY06	M.L. 2007 or FY08	M.L. 2008 or FY09	M.L. 2009 or FY10	M.L. 2010	M.L 2011 or FY12- 13
ENRTF	\$92,000	\$90,000	\$53,000	\$92,000	\$90,000		\$200,000

	Subd.5(b)	Subd.5(b)	Subd.4c (2.1).	Subd. 3(a)2.1	Subd. 4(f)2.3		Subd. 4(i)
Outdoor Heritage Fund- CPL						\$94,374	
Upper Mississippi River Forestry Partnership		\$10,000					
Friends of the Mississippi River	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000	5,000	5,000
St. Paul Audubon Society		\$5,000					
Outdoor Heritage Fund-					\$227,300		\$150,000
Private landowners	\$80,000	\$80,000	\$80,000	\$80,000	\$80,000	80,000	\$80,000

**VIII. ACQUISITION/RESTORATION LIST:**

**IX. MAP(S):**

**X. RESEARCH ADDENDUM:**

**XI. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS:**

Periodic work plan status update reports will be submitted not later than February 1, 2014, August 1, 2014, February 1, 2015, August 1, 2015, and February 1, 2016. A final report and associated products will be submitted between June 30 and August 15, 2016 as requested by the LCCMR.

<b>Attachment A: Budget Detail for M.L. 2013 Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund Projects</b>									
<b>Project Title:</b> <i>Metro Conservation Corridors (MeCC) Phase VII-Friends of the Mississippi River. Protect, Restore and</i>									
<b>Legal Citation:</b> M.L. 2013, Chp. 52, Sec. 2, Subd. 04d2.1/3.4									
<b>Project Manager:</b> Tom Lewanski									
<b>M.L. 2013 ENRTF Appropriation:</b> \$ 304,000									
<b>Project Length and Completion Date:</b> 3 years ending <i>June 30, 2016</i>									
<b>Date of Update:</b> October 31, 2016									
<b>ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES TRUST FUND BUDGET</b>		<b>Activity 1 Budget</b>	<b>Amended Activity 1 Budget (10/31/16)</b>	<b>Amount Spent</b>	<b>Balance</b>	<b>Activity 2 Budget</b>	<b>Amount Spent</b>	<b>Balance</b>	<b>TOTAL BALANCE</b>
<b>BUDGET ITEM</b>		<b>Habitat restoration and enhancement</b>				<b>Acquisition at Fish Creek Natural Area</b>			
<b>Personnel (Wages and Benefits)</b>									
Conservation Director. (1) Project and partner coordination. 80% salary, 20% benefits. .01 FTE. July 1, 2013 - June 30, 2016.		2,200	2,663	2,663	0				0
Ecologist. (2). Specific restoration/enhancement project planning, coordination & implementation. 80% salary, 20% benefits. .2 FTE. July 1, 2013 - June 30, 2016.		21,200	20,654	20,398	256				256
Bookkeeper.(1). Financial recordkeeping and invoicing. 80% salary, 20% benefits. .006 FTE. July 1, 2013 - June 30, 2016.		600	683	683	0				0
<b>Professional/Technical/Service Contracts</b> <i>Contracts: Professional/technical. Vendors to provide restoration activities such as prescribed burns, soil prep., seeding, woody and exotic plant removal, herbicide application, etc. (Vendor contracts will be awarded on a competitive and performance basis.)</i>		111,100	110,620	110,464	156				156
<b>Equipment/Tools/Supplies</b> <i>Restoration supplies (Gloves, fencing, posts, signs, misc. supplies)</i>		545		545	0				0
<b>Equipment/Tools/Supplies</b> <i>(Trees, shrubs, seed)</i>		5,355	5,819	5,819	0				0
<b>Fee Title Acquisition</b> <i>( 6 acres acquired in the Fish Creek Natural Area. The City of Maplewood will hold the title to the land.)</i>					0	162,000	162,000	0	0
<b>Travel expenses in Minnesota</b> <i>(mileage)</i>		4,000	1,016	1,016	0				0
<b>COLUMN TOTAL</b>		<b>\$142,000</b>		<b>\$141,588</b>	<b>\$412</b>	<b>\$162,000</b>	<b>\$162,000</b>	<b>\$0</b>	412



**Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund**

**M.L. 2013 Acquisition/Restoration List**

**Project Title:** 2.1-MeCC7 –Protect, Restore and Enhance Significant Watershed Habitat

**Project Manager Name:** Tom Lewanski

**M.L. 2013 ENRTF Appropriation:** \$ 304,000

#	Acquisition or Restoration Parcel Name	Geographic Coordinates		Estimated Cost	Estimated Annual PILT Liabilities	County	Ecological Significance	Activity Description	# of Acres	# of Shoreline Miles	Type of Landowner	Proposed Fee Title or Form	Status
		Latitude	Longitude										
1	Gelhar-Emrick	518412.3	4949886	\$ 8,850	NA	Dakota	Prairie- Mississippi River bluffland above Vermillion River Bottoms.	Prairie enhancement - burning	20		Private		We did not do the larger project originally planned because site did not need additional work at that time.
2	Heritage Village Park	498607.5	4967409	\$ 9,800	NA	Dakota	Mississippi River floodplain. Important bird habitat.	Exotic plant control	10		Public		Restoration activities completed
3	Mississippi River Gorge	484629.9	4972939	\$ 12,540	NA	Hennepin, Ramsey	Floodplain forest, wetland, upland forest, prairie. Mississippi River bluffland. Migratory corridor, Important bird habitat.	Exotic plant control and native plant installation.	5		Public		Restoration activities completed
4	Mounds Park	495412.3	4977046	\$ 2,720	NA	Ramsey	Bluff prairie. Mississippi River bluffland. Migratory corridor, Important bird habitat.	Exotic plant control and native plant installation.	1		Public		Project received other funding
5	Pine Bend Bluffs Natural Area	497895.5	4959176	\$ 22,875	NA	Dakota	Upland forest and prairie. Diverse and rare natural communities. Part of local greenway. Important bird habitat.	Exotic plant control, prescribed burns, prep and seed prairie restoration	25		Public		Restoration activities completed
6	Ravenna block greenway	518242	4943118	\$ 8,300	NA	Dakota	Oak forest and grassland. Contiguous forest within greenway, opportunity for prairie re-creation.	Invasive species management, prairie & savanna restoration- site prep and	15		Private		Restoration activities completed

