



Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund (ENRTF) M.L. 2013 Work Plan

Date of Status Update Report:

Date of Next Status Update Report: January 31, 2014

Date of Work Plan Approval: June 25, 2013

Project Completion Date: June 30, 2016

Is this an amendment request? _____

PROJECT TITLE: Native Prairie Stewardship & Prairie Bank Easement

Project Manager: Jason Garms

Affiliation: MN DNR - SNA

Mailing Address: 500 Lafayette Rd Box 25

City/State/Zip Code: Saint Paul, MN 55155

Telephone Number: (651) 259-5130

Email Address: jason.garms@state.mn.us

Web Address: www.dnr.state.mn.us

Location: Statewide

Total ENRTF Project Budget:

ENRTF Appropriation: \$750,000

Amount Spent: \$0

Balance: \$750,000

Legal Citation: M.L. 2013, Chp. 52, Sec. 2, Subd. 04c

Appropriation Language: \$750,000 the first year is from the trust fund to the commissioner of natural resources to acquire native prairie bank easements, prepare baseline property assessments, restore and enhance native prairie sites, and provide technical assistance to landowners. This appropriation is available until June 30, 2016, by which time the project must be completed and final products delivered.

I. PROJECT TITLE: Native Prairie Stewardship & Prairie Bank Easement

II. PROJECT STATEMENT: About half of Minnesota's 225,000 acres of remaining native prairie is not formally protected, meaning it's in the hands of private landowners. The MN Prairie Conservation Plan calls for the protection of remaining native prairie in the State of Minnesota. This project aims to work with landowners of native prairie sites identified by the MN Biological Survey (MBS) and provide them protection options and support their conservation efforts through a suite of tools offered by the DNR Scientific and Natural Area (SNA) Program. About 200 acres of high quality native prairie will be acquired by the DNR and permanently protected as Native Prairie Bank (NPB) conservation easements. Native habitat restoration and enhancement activities will be implemented on 690 acres of NPBs and high priority private prairie lands threatened by human impacts, invasive species, and lack of natural disturbance regimes. Private landowners will also receive management consultation from SNA Prairie Specialists as well as prairie stewardship planning assistance.

III. PROJECT STATUS UPDATES:

Project Status as of *(January 31, 2014):*

Project Status as of *(July 31, 2014):*

Project Status as of *(January 31, 2015):*

Project Status as of *(July 31, 2015):*

Project Status as of *(January 31, 2016):*

Final Report Summary:

IV. PROJECT ACTIVITIES AND OUTCOMES:

ACTIVITY 1: NPB Acquisition of Prairie of Biodiversity Significance

Description: The SNA Program will protect and buffer native prairie sites of biodiversity significance by acquisition of perpetual NPB conservation easements on 200 acres. NPB conservation easement baseline reports and monitoring would be completed on about 12 sites; including those sites acquired through these funds (~1-4 sites) and up to 8 existing NPB easement sites. As of March 2012, the SNA Program manages 102 NPB conservation easements of which 27 have baseline property reports; creating a backlog of 75 baseline reports to complete. Priority sites are identified by MBS and target rare and endangered plant and animal species, high quality plant communities, and key habitats for Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN) identified in the State Wildlife Action Plan (SWAP). NPB payments rates are 65% of the permanent marginal agricultural land payment rate as established by the Board of Water and Soil Resources, which is updated annually. Any buffers, or lands needing restoration, will be completed using a combination of funds from Activity 2 below and/or bonding appropriations. It is anticipated that only 10 of the 200 acquired will need restoration. NPB conservation easements are monitored according to the "Scientific & Natural Areas Program Conservation Easement Long-Term Stewardship, Monitoring & Enforcement Plan". This plan calls for annual landowner contacts and on-the-ground site evaluations every 1-3 years. Long-term monitoring and enforcement costs will be covered by a combination funding sources, including, but not limited to, ENRTF, OHF, federal grants, and other funds as appropriated. The *Scientific and Natural Area (SNA) Program Conservation Easement Long-Term Stewardship, Monitoring and Enforcement Plan* is available upon request. A separate NPB stewardship and enforcement fund does not exist at this time, but will be pursued in the future.

Summary Budget Information for Activity 1:**ENRTF Budget: \$ 538,000****Amount Spent: \$ 0****Balance: \$ 538,000****Activity Completion Date:**

Outcome	Completion Date	Budget
1. acquisition of NPB conservation easement 200 acres of native prairie	6/30/2016	\$514,000
2. baseline property reports & monitoring for 12 NPB easements	6/30/2016	\$24,000

Project Status as of (January 31, 2014):**Project Status as of (July 31, 2014):****Project Status as of (January 31, 2015):****Project Status as of (July 31, 2015):****Project Status as of (January 31, 2016):****Final Report Summary:****ACTIVITY 2: Native Prairie Restoration & Enhancement**

Description: Restoration and enhancement activities would be completed on about 690 acres at up to about 12 NPBs and 3 native prairie stewardship sites. Management practices at 3 NPB sites would be measured to evaluate if objectives were met as part of adaptive management. This activity will contribute towards implementation of the SWAP through restoration of native prairie needed to support SGCN (also Habitat Recommendation 5 of the SCPP), as well as the management recommendations of the MN Prairie Conservation Plan. Restoration and enhancement activities – including bringing sites acquired up to minimum standards – would be carried out through landowner agreements, DNR staff, Minnesota Conservation Corps Minnesota (CCM), and private contractors. Activities include seed collection, planting, exotics control, woody encroachment removal, boundary signing, prescribed burns (or prescribed haying or mowing, necessary for sites or conditions where use of fire is limited), and monitoring. Restoration and enhancement projects will be based upon ecological restoration and management plans and/or project plans with goals for reconstructing or enhancing plant communities that are native to the site based upon soils, topography, geology, and other factors necessary to sustain the plant community. Each plan includes an implementation timetable which summarizes ongoing management needs and funding. All restorations will use seeds/plants of a local ecotype, collected from onsite or within 25 miles. Long-term management costs (e.g. invasives treatments, prescribed fire, and monitoring/evaluation) will be covered by a combination funding sources, including, but not limited to, ENRTF, OHF, federal grants, and other funds as appropriated. Restoration projects will receive an initial evaluation in terms of project goals and to ascertain how well the native plants have been established which will be included in the final report. In order to facilitate long term ecological and site management monitoring and more robust and accurate accomplishment reporting, the Adaptive Management Spatial Database (AMSD) was launched with ENRTF support. This activity and its funding would include all work needed to bring up to the Department's minimum standards those NPB easements acquired through this funding (e.g. boundary signing and site cleanup).

Summary Budget Information for Activity 2:**ENRTF Budget: \$ 143,000****Amount Spent: \$ 0****Balance: \$ 143,000**

Activity Completion Date:

Outcome	Completion Date	Budget
1. 10 acres of prairie reconstruction (restoration)	6/30/2016	\$12,000
2. 80 acres of woody removal & exotics species treatment	6/30/2016	\$60,000
3. 600 acres of prescribed burning, haying or mowing	6/30/2016	\$60,000
4. NPB easement boundary signs & development work to meet minimum standards on 3-4 NPB sites (including those acquired with this funding)	6/30/2016	\$5,000
5. adaptive management monitoring on 3 NPB sites	6/30/2016	\$6,000

Project Status as of (January 31, 2014):

Project Status as of (July 31, 2014):

Project Status as of (January 31, 2015):

Project Status as of (July 31, 2015):

Project Status as of (January 31, 2016):

Final Report Summary:

ACTIVITY 3: Native Prairie Landowner Assistance & Incentives

Description: Private landowners will increase their stewardship of native prairie through a suite of strategies. Three prairie management workshops/field days for private landowners and other practitioners will be held. DNR staff will meet with 16 landowners to provide technical consultation on how to best manage their prairie. At least 10 landowners will receive a comprehensive prairie stewardship plan including an evaluation their prairie's condition, identification of management needs, and recommendations for management action.

Summary Budget Information for Activity 3:

ENRTF Budget: \$ 69,000

Amount Spent: \$ 0

Balance: \$ 69,000

Activity Completion Date:

Outcome	Completion Date	Budget
1. 3 workshops/field days for prairie landowners & practitioners	6/30/2016	\$6,000
2. consultations, guidance, mgmt. asst., etc. to 16 landowners	6/30/2016	\$25,100
3. prairie stewardship plans provided to 10 prairie landowners	6/30/2016	\$37,900

Activity Status as of (January 31, 2014):

Activity Status as of (July 31 2014):

Activity Status as of (January 31, 2015):

Activity Status as of (July 31, 2015):

Activity Status as of (January 31, 2016):

Final Report Summary:

V. DISSEMINATION:

Description: Copies of Stewardship Plans are provided to local DNR managers and used by the landowner with other agencies and programs. Workshops and field days will be listed on the SNA website:
<http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/snas/index.html>.

Status as of (January 2014):

Status as of (July 2014):

Status as of (January 2015):

Status as of (July 2015):

Status as of (January 2016):

Final Report Summary:

VI. PROJECT BUDGET SUMMARY:

A. ENRTF Budget:

Budget Category	\$ Amount	Explanation
Personnel:	\$ 134,190	Acquisition Coordinator (.25 FTE for 3-yr; ~\$47.5K) ; Specialist and Technician (.50 FTE spread across 4 people for 3-yr; ~\$68.5K); Laborer and seasonal crews (.20 FTE spread across 2 people for 3-yr; ~\$17.5K)
Professional/Technical/Service Contracts:	\$106,100	Professional/technical Contractors (state bid process) will be sought for delivering easement baseline property reports, adaptive management monitoring, and private Prairie Stewardship Plans. Service contracts will use CCM or the state bid process for delivering including woody encroachment removal & exotics control, prescribed burning/ <u>mowing</u> , and site development
Equipment/Tools/Supplies:	\$5,190	Supplies, parts, tools, repair costs & supplies for restoration and enhancement, including safety items, hand tools, etc; signs & posts; workshop & event supplies
Easement Acquisition:	\$447,000	Estimate securing about 3 easements for 200 acres that will be held by the MN DNR - SNA Program
Professional Services for Acquisition:	\$25,000	Attorney General's Office and DNR Lands and Minerals costs associated with completing an acquisition; anticipate about 3 transactions; cost/transaction varies greatly between projects...\$5000 - \$12,000/acquisition
Printing:	\$400	Printing of materials for workshops and field days, and prairie stewardship plans

Travel Expenses in MN:	\$7,000	Fleet charges for trucks, cars, & equipment, e.g. mowers, seeders; mileage, lodging & meals as per state contracts
Direct and Necessary Services for the Appropriation:*	\$25,120	DNR costs for the appropriation
TOTAL ENRTF BUDGET:		\$750,000

* Direct and Necessary expenses include both Department Support Services (Human Resources, IT, Financial Management, Communications, Procurement, and Facilities) and Division Support Services. Department Support Services are described in agency Service Level Agreements, and billed internally to divisions based on indices that have been developed for each area of service. Department leadership (Commissioner's Office and Regional Directors) are not assessed. Division Support Services include costs associated with Division business offices and clerical support. Those elements of individual projects that put little or no demand on support services such as large single-source contracts, large land acquisitions, and funds that are passed-thru to other entities are not assessed Direct and Necessary costs for those activities. For this work plan, the easement acquisition activity (Activity 1.1) with an associated cost of \$447,000 has not been assessed Direct and Necessary costs."

Explanation of Use of Classified Staff: Consistent with approved work plans for previous ENRTF appropriations for the SNA program, this funding will be used to pay project-associated costs for classified and unclassified staff paid almost exclusively with special project funds. These positions would not exist, but for special project funding received through the ENRTF and other funds. Each year these positions are assigned work based on the particular combination of soft funding available to address priority SNA Program activities. No funding from this appropriation will be used to cover personnel costs for this work program's Project Manager.

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

Number of Full-time Equivalent (FTE) funded with this ENRTF appropriation: A total of .95 FTE's spread across 7 different people for 3-years.

Number of Full-time Equivalent (FTE) estimated to be funded through contracts with this ENRTF appropriation: It's not possible to know how many employees a future contractor will use, the hours they will work, or what salary they may pay their employees. It only possible to estimate the total funding for contracts - \$107,639.

B. Other Funds:

Source of Funds	\$ Amount Proposed	\$ Amount Spent	Use of Other Funds
Non-state			
	\$	\$	
State			
	\$	\$	
TOTAL OTHER FUNDS:	\$	\$	

VII. PROJECT STRATEGY:

A. Project Partners: This proposal includes the DNR's work and funding to be used by the SNA program towards partnership project work on NPB's and other native prairie stewardship lands being submitted as separate, but coordinated LCCMR projects. This includes work with The Nature Conservancy and DNR Division of Fish and Wildlife. These efforts are complementary not redundant; all accomplishments on joint projects would be prorated.

B. Project Impact and Long-term Strategy: The Division's long-term goal is to permanently protect an additional 20,000-25,000 acres of quality native prairie in the NPB program. This strategy is tied to the larger statewide

strategies outlined in the MN Prairie Conservation Plan, which calls for the protection and management of all remaining native prairie.

C. Spending History:

Funding Source	M.L. 2007 or FY08	M.L. 2008 or FY09	M.L. 2009 or FY10	M.L. 2010 or FY11	M.L. 2011 or FY12-13
ENRTF	\$50,000 (4b) \$220,000 (4d)	\$37,500 (3c) \$815,000 (3m)	\$37,500 (4e)	\$31,500 (4f) \$1,046,000 (4b)	\$1,000,000 (4h)
OHF				\$650,000	229,000
G.O. bonding		\$2,000,000			
Landowner and conservation partner donations		\$38,000			

VIII. ACQUISITION/RESTORATION LIST: *See attached list*

IX. MAP(S): *See attached list*

X. RESEARCH ADDENDUM:

XI. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS:

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

Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund
M.L. 2013 Acquisition/Restoration List
Project Title: Native Prairie Stewardship and Native Prairie Bank Acquisition

Project Manager Name: Jason Garms

Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund \$ Request: \$750,000

#	Acquisition Parcel Name	Geographic Coordinates		Estimated Cost	Estimated Annual PILT Liabilities	Acquisition Type (Fee Title or Conservation Easement)	County	Ecological Significance	Proposed # of Acres	Proposed # of Shoreline Miles	Type of Landowner	Proposed Fee Title or Easement Holder (if applicable)	Status
		Latitude	Longitude										
1	Chanarambie Creek Prairies	258042	4866495	\$2418/ac	\$0	Conservation Easement	Murray, Pipestone	Dry gravel, mesic & wet prairies in biggest grassland complex with the highest quality prairie parcels in SW MN	80	NA	Private	DNR - SNA	
2	Lake Traverse Prairies	212359	5065640	\$1925/ac	\$0	Conservation Easement	Traverse	dry hill prairie, prairie meadow, wet prairie, rare species	60	NA	Private	DNR - SNA	
3	Lac Qui Parle Prairies	243928	5016740	\$2150/ac	\$0	Conservation Easement	Big Stone	Next to existing DNR and TNC protected native prairies, part of a large macro site with many native prairie tracts; expands habitat for many rare butterfly and bird species	80	NA	Private	DNR - SNA	
4	Glacial Lakes & Moraine Prairie	307591	5043821	\$1550/ac	\$0	Conservation Easement	Pope, Kandiyohi	Dry sand-gravel prairies of the Alexandria Moraine, provides habitat for the Threatened Dakota Skipper as well as the Poweshiek Skipper and Regal Fritillary	120	NA	Private	DNR - SNA	
5	Root River Prairies	599661	4851588	\$1825/ac	\$0	Conservation Easement	Houston, Filmore, Winona	Southern Dry Bedrock Bluff (goat) prairies in a complex of bluff prairies and cold streams; habitat for timber rattlesnakes	30	NA	Private	DNR - SNA	
6	Upper MN River Prairies	299289	4963870	\$2580/ac	\$0	Conservation Easement	Chippewa, Yellow Medicine, Renville, Redwood	MN River River native prairie including oak savanna, wet prairie, rock outcrops; expands habitat for many rare plants, butterflies and birds	80	NA	Private	DNR - SNA	
7	Yellow Medicine Coteau Prairie	232251	4957954	\$1990/ac	\$0	Conservation Easement	Yellow Medicine	Dry hill prairie, prairie meadow, wet prairie, rare species; part of a large, contiguous prairie macrosite, expands habitat for Western White Prairie Clover and Upland Sandpiper	100	NA	Private	DNR - SNA	
8	Rock County Rock Outcrop Prairies	236510	4848531	\$2925/ac	\$0	Conservation Easement	Rock	Mesic to wet prairie with rock outcrops; provides habitat for many rare rock outcrop plants	40	NA	Private	DNR - SNA	
9	Holly 2 Native Prairie Bank	300379	4895366	\$1200/ac	\$0	Prairie restoration	Murray	Dry Hill Prairie, part of Plum Creek complex of native prairies, within Prairie Plan Core Area	10	NA	Private	DNR - SNA	
NOTES: The above list represents locations with identified high quality prairies and interested landowners. This proposal will target these locations and enroll 200 acres; not all sites on the list will be enrolled. Parcel Names are named Prairie Core Areas identified in the 2010 MN Prairie Conservation Plan (except: Root River Prairies and Rock County Rock Outcrop Prairies). Parcel lists for woody removal, exotics treatment and prescribed burning/disturbance projects are not known at this time and will be reported in work program updates.													



Minnesota Department of Natural Resources
Division of Ecological and Water Resources
Project Manager: Jason Garms, Scientific and Nature Areas Program





