



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

Date of Status Update Report:

Date of Next Status Update Report: 02/01/2014

Date of Work Plan Approval: 06/25/2013

Project Completion Date: June 30, 2016

Is this an amendment request? N

PROJECT TITLE: Priority Expansion of the MN Valley National Wildlife Refuge, MeCC VII

Project Manager: Deborah Loon

Affiliation: Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge Trust, Inc.

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Location: Twin Cities Metropolitan Urbanizing Area, specifically LeSueur, Scott and/or Sibley Counties.

Total ENRTF Project Budget:

ENRTF Appropriation: \$400,000

Amount Spent: \$0

Balance: \$400,000

Legal Citation: M.L. 2013, Chp. 52, Sec. 2, Subd.04d3.3

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: Priority Expansion of the MN Valley National Wildlife Refuge, MeCC VII

II. PROJECT STATEMENT: The Minnesota Valley Trust (MVT) will protect through fee title acquisition at least 100 acres to expand the Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge (Refuge), as delineated by the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). MVT will protect through fee title acquisition at least an additional 50 acres in the Refuge expansion areas with other, non-state funds, for a total addition of 150 acres to the Refuge.

The Refuge expansion units have been prioritized by the USFWS through a public planning process as having strong potential to provide high quality habitat for wildlife and opportunities for wildlife-dependent recreation. The lands are primarily along the Minnesota River and include river frontage, floodplain and cropland. Potential parcels to acquire for Refuge expansion are located in the following Refuge unit boundaries -- Blakely (Sibley County), Jessenland (Scott and LeSueur Counties), and St. Lawrence (Scott County).

III. PROJECT STATUS UPDATES:

Project Status as of February 1, 2014:

Project Status as of August 1, 2014:

Project Status as of February 1, 2015:

Project Status as of August 1, 2015:

Project Status as of February 1, 2016:

IV. PROJECT ACTIVITIES AND OUTCOMES:

ACTIVITY 1:

Description: The Minnesota Valley Trust will complete fee title acquisition of at least 100 acres to expand one or more of the following units of the Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge –

- Blakely Unit (Scott County)
- Jessenland Unit (Sibley County)
- St. Lawrence Unit (Scott County)

If a strategic opportunity to acquire land for one of the following Refuge units, the acquisition list will be updated to include that unit:

- Rapids Lake Unit (Carver County)
- San Francisco Unit (Carver County)
- A prospective new unit between Henderson and LeSueur as delineated by USFWS (LeSueur and Sibley Counties).

At least 50 additional acres will be acquired for the Refuge by the MN Valley Trust using other, non-state funds.

The Refuge expansion units have been prioritized and delineated by the USFWS in its Comprehensive Conservation Plan (CCP) through a public planning process as having strong potential to provide high quality habitat for wildlife and opportunities for wildlife-dependent recreation.

<http://www.fws.gov/midwest/planning/MinnesotaValley/index.html>

<http://www.fws.gov/midwest/planning/MinnesotaValley/finalccp.pdf>

The lands are along the Minnesota River and include river frontage, floodplain and cropland. The CCP was updated in 2011. All potential parcels are within the delineated boundaries and identified as high priority lands for acquisition in the CCP. In addition, written approval will be sought from the Commissioner of the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources prior to the acquisition per MN Statutes 116P.17; a copy of that approval will be provided to LCCMR.

The prospective lands offer significant habitat for wildlife and opportunities for wildlife-dependent recreation. The lands run along the Minnesota River and include river frontage, floodplain, cropland and bluffs. Some are adjacent to lands already in public ownership (USFWS, DNR) or previously acquired by the MN Valley Trust for the Refuge expansion.

These acquisitions will connect the river, floodplain forest and prairie habitat in the Minnesota River bottoms, benefiting many species of wildlife including wood ducks, mallards, bald eagles, grassland nesting birds as well as numerous resident game species such as turkeys and deer.

This project will improve water quality by retiring cropland in the Minnesota River Valley and restoring lands to the natural habitats of floodplain forest, wetlands and prairie. When donated to the USFWS, the public will be given access to the lands for wildlife-dependent recreational activities, such as birding, photography, hiking, interpretation, hunting and fishing.

The MN Valley Trust (MVT) and US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) will develop a restoration and management plan(s) for the acquired parcel(s), then restore and enhance the floodplain forest, wetlands and prairie, as appropriate to the parcel. Cropland will be retired and drain tile broken. The MVT is the source of funds for this restoration and management work; the funds are secure.

The lands acquired will be donated to the USFWS for perpetual management for wildlife and wildlife-dependent recreation as part of the Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge. An estimate of increased operations and maintenance costs will be provided to LCCMR. The increased costs for operations and maintenance will be the responsibility of the MVT and USFWS.

Summary Budget Information for Activity 1:

ENRTF Budget: \$ 400,000
Amount Spent: \$ 0
Balance: \$ 400,000

Activity Completion Date:

Outcome	Completion Date	Budget
1. Fee Title Acquisition of 100 Acres to Expand the Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge		\$ 400,000

Activity Status as of February 1, 2014:

Activity Status as of August 1, 2014:

Activity Status as of February 1, 2015:

Activity Status as of August 1, 2015:

Activity Status as of February 1, 2016:

Final Report Summary:

V. DISSEMINATION:

Description: As projects are completed, the Minnesota Valley Trust will announce the accomplishments through press releases and the Trust website.

Status as of February 1, 2014:

Status as of August 1, 2014:

Status as of February 1, 2015:

Status as of August 1, 2015:

Status as of February 1, 2016:

Final Report Summary:

VI. PROJECT BUDGET SUMMARY:

A. ENRTF Budget:

Budget Category	\$ Amount	Explanation
Fee Title Acquisition:	\$ 400,000	
TOTAL ENRTF BUDGET:	\$ 400,000	

Explanation of Use of Classified Staff: NA

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

Number of Full-time Equivalent (FTE) funded with this ENRTF appropriation: NA

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

B. Other Funds:

Source of Funds	\$ Amount Proposed	\$ Amount Spent	Use of Other Funds
Non-state			
MN Valley Trust and/or other private funds	\$ 200,000	\$	Fee Title Acquisition of 50 acres to expand the Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge
TOTAL OTHER FUNDS:	\$ 200,000	\$	

VII. PROJECT STRATEGY:

A. Project Partners: Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge (USFWS), all Metro Conservation Corridors Partners, Friends of the Minnesota Valley, local communities

B. Project Impact and Long-term Strategy: This project is part of a long-term strategy to expand the Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge by up to 10,000 acres and restore and enhance the Refuge's forest, wetland and prairie habitat for wildlife and wildlife-dependent recreation. The expansion and restoration strategy was developed by the US Fish and Wildlife Service in its Comprehensive Conservation Plan (CCP) for the Refuge, completed September 2004 after a thorough public input process. The CCP was updated by the USFWS in 2011.

This project will further acquisition work completed previously by the Minnesota Valley Trust with support from the ENRTF. The benefits of the project include the following:

- Connect the river, floodplain forest and prairie habitat in the Minnesota River bottoms, benefiting many species of wildlife. It will increase the breeding and migratory habitat for waterfowl, shorebirds, neotropical migrants and other species, including non-migratory resident species.
- Improve water quality of the Minnesota River by retiring cropland and restoring lands to the natural habitats of floodplain forest, wetlands and prairie.
- Expand the public's access to and enjoyment of public lands in and near the Twin Cities metropolitan area for wildlife-dependent recreational activities of birding, photography, hiking, interpretation, hunting and fishing.

C. Spending History:

Funding Source	M.L. 2005 or FY 2006-07	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 (MeCC)	\$ 230,000	\$ 210,000	\$ 225,000	\$ 225,000	\$ 325,000	\$ 600,000
Non-state, private funds	\$ 428,000	\$ 376,473	\$ 197,019	\$ 151,155	\$ 324,146	\$ 500,000

VIII. ACQUISITION/RESTORATION LIST: Attached

IX. MAP(S): Attached

X. RESEARCH ADDENDUM: NA

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.

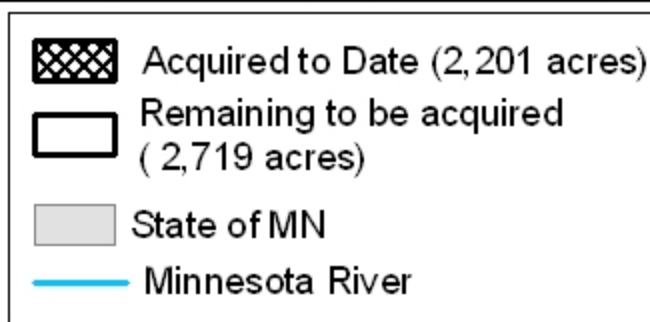
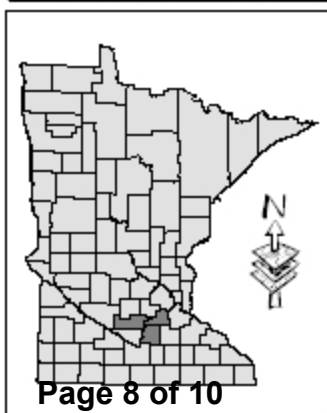
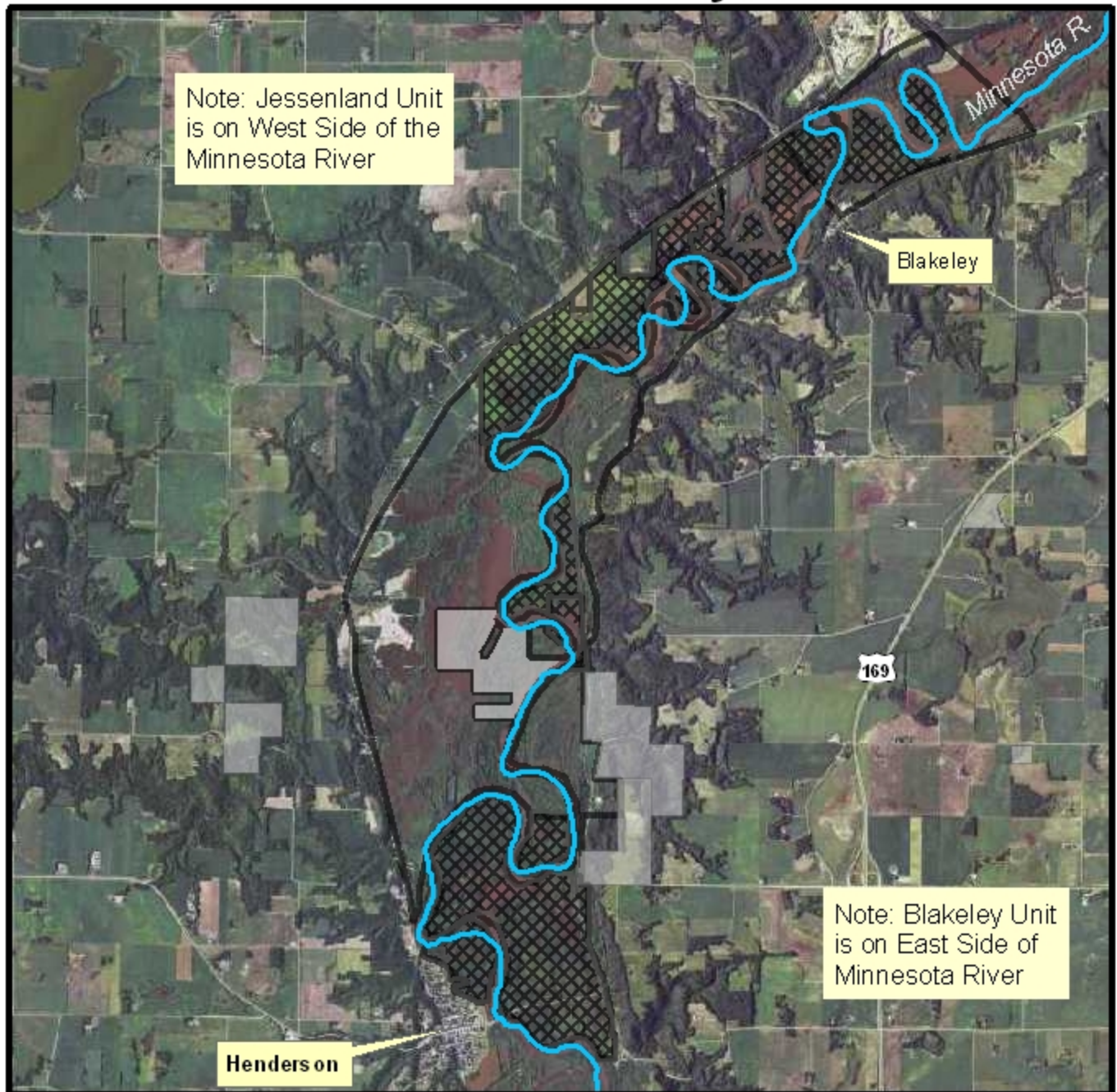
Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund
M.L. 2013 Acquisition/Restoration List

Project Title: Priority Expansion of the Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge, MeCC VII
Project Manager Name: Deborah Loon, Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge Trust, Inc.
M.L. 2013 ENRTF Appropriation: \$400,000

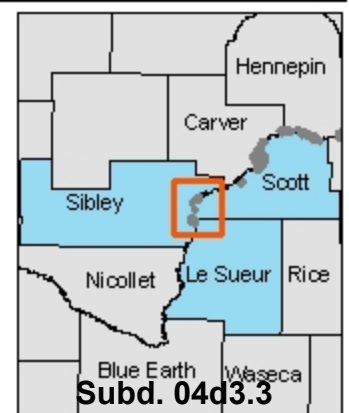
#	Acquisition or Restoration Parcel Name	Geographic Coordinates		Estimated Cost	Estimated Annual PILT Liabilities	County	Ecological Significance	Activity Description	# of Acres	# of Shoreline Miles	Type of Landowner	Proposed Fee Title or Easement Holder (if applicable)	Status
		Latitude	Longitude										
1	Blakely Unit Expansion, MVNWR	44 ⁰ 34'40"N	93 ⁰ 52'29"W	\$ 400,000	\$ -	Scott	Floodplain forest, wetland and prairie	Fee Title Acquisition	100	TBD	private / trust	See note 2	Outreach to landowners
2	Jessenland Unit Expansion, MVNWR	44 ⁰ 34'28"N	93 ⁰ 54'20"W	\$ 400,000	\$ -	Sibley	Floodplain forest, wetland and prairie	Fee Title Acquisition	100	TBD	private / trust	See note 2	Outreach to landowners
3	St. Lawrence Unit Expansion, MVNWR	44 ⁰ 39'01"N	93 ⁰ 42'13"W	\$ 400,000	\$ -	Scott	Wetland and prairie	Fee Title Acquisition	100	0	private / trust	See note 2	Outreach to landowners
NOTES: (1) Parcel search areas are within the Refuge expansion units, as delineated by the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) through a planning process that combined data review, on the ground site review and public input. Most lands are within the Minnesota River floodplain, have river frontage or are contingent to parcels with river frontage, and contain floodplain forest, wetland and prairie, providing significant habitat for wildlife and wildlife-dependent recreation for the public. (2) The Initial fee title holder will be Minnesota Valley Lands, Inc. (subsidiary of Minnesota Valley Trust), while habitat restoration and enhancement is conducted. Eventual fee title holder will be Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge of the USFWS.													

Attachment A: Budget Detail for M.L. 2013 Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund Projects					
Project Title: <i>Priority Expansion of the MN Valley National Wildlife Refuge, MeCC VII</i>					
Legal Citation: M.L. 2013, Chp. 52, Sec. 2, Subd.04d3.3					
Project Manager: <i>Deborah Loon</i>					
M.L. 2013 ENRTF Appropriation: \$ 400,000					
Project Length and Completion Date: <i>June 30, 2016</i>					
Date of Update:					
ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES TRUST FUND BUDGET	Activity 1 Budget	Amount Spent	Balance	TOTAL BUDGET	TOTAL BALANCE
BUDGET ITEM	<i>Fee Title Acquisition</i>				
Fee Title Acquisition <i>Fee title acquisition of 100 acres to expand the MN Valley National Wildlife Refuge. Land acquired will be donated to the US Fish and Wildlife Service.</i>	400,000		400,000	400,000	400,000
COLUMN TOTAL					

Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge Expansion Jessenland & Blakeley Units



0 0.45 0.9 1.8 Miles
 07/22/2013



Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge Expansion

St. Lawrence Unit

