



Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund (ENRTF) M.L. 2015 Work Plan

Date of Report: June 24, 2015

Date of Next Status Update Report: February 1, 2016

Date of Work Plan Approval:

Project Completion Date: June 30, 2018

Does this submission include an amendment request? No

PROJECT TITLE: Metropolitan Conservation Corridors Phase VIII – Strategic Lands Protection

Project Manager: Robert McGillivray

Organization: The Trust for Public Land

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Location: Chisago, Washington Counties

Total ENRTF Project Budget:

ENRTF Appropriation: \$750,000

Amount Spent: \$0

Balance: \$750,000

Legal Citation: M.L. 2015, Chp. 76, Sec. 2, Subd. 09f

Appropriation Language:

\$750,000 the first year is from the trust fund to the commissioner of natural resources for an agreement with The Trust for Public Land for the eighth phase of the Metropolitan Conservation Corridors partnership to acquire in fee at least 35 acres of high quality priority state and local natural areas in the metropolitan area, as defined under Minnesota Statutes, section 473.121, subdivision 2, and portions of the surrounding counties. A list of proposed acquisitions must be provided as part of the required work plan. 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. A list of fee title acquisitions must be provided as part of the required work plan. This appropriation is available until June 30, 2018, by which time the project must be completed and final products delivered.

I. PROJECT TITLE: Metropolitan Conservation Corridors Phase VIII – Strategic Lands Protection

II. PROJECT STATEMENT:

The Trust for Public Land will protect through fee title acquisition approximately 35 acres of high quality habitat and 0.2 miles of shoreline within the greater Twin Cities Metropolitan Area. These lands have been identified and prioritized through state, regional and local natural resource plans due to their high biodiversity, connectivity, and ability to create corridors for wildlife movement.

In the Twin Cities Metropolitan area and surrounding counties, opportunities to protect priority conservation lands decrease daily because lands are being developed and land values are escalating – particularly for properties adjoining already protected lands or for those that have lakeshore and river/stream frontage with high natural resource values. Communities are facing challenges to protect and restore these areas, while also providing access to enjoy natural areas close to home.

To address these challenges, The Trust for Public Land is strategically focusing its conservation efforts on protecting remaining high priority natural areas in the Metro Area – particularly in Washington and Chisago Counties. Within the Metro Conservation Corridors Partnership, key corridors have been identified through science-based classifications and Geographic Information System (GIS) mapping. The goals of The Trust for Public Land’s Strategic Land Protection Program are:

- To protect lands and waters within targeted high-biodiversity focus areas – including along streams, rivers and lakes -- that are imminently threatened by fragmentation, conversation, degradation or sale – and that are currently not eligible for other protection funding due in large part to hunting requirements
- To create corridors of habitat to facilitate the movement of wildlife
- To create close-to-home opportunities for outdoor recreation, wildlife viewing, photography, fishing and other experiences for Minnesotans

By permanently protecting these strategically selected lands, multiple long term benefits will be achieved:

- Provision and protection of high quality habitat for migrant and resident wildlife species
- Resilience of native animal and plant populations (including “Species in Greatest Conservation Need”) in the face of climate change and invasive species, due to improved ecosystem connectivity
- Protection of our lakes, rivers and streams and improved quality of our ground water
- Increased access to outdoor recreation and enjoyment in the Metro Area where nearly 60% of the state’s population lives, and is projected to increase by 28% over the next 30 years

The Trust for Public Land is targeting strategic parcels in the following areas of Washington and Chisago Counties with the highest capacity to provide benefits to wildlife, humans, and water quality; adjacency to already protected land; and landowner willingness to sell for conservation purposes:

- **St. Croix/Franconia Bluffs SNA:** In the St. Croix Valley in Washington and Chisago Counties, The Trust for Public Land is building on its past successful protection partnership with DNR’s SNA program to protect critical habitat in this important ecological corridor as defined by DNR’s Division of Ecological Services. The St. Croix has been identified in Tomorrow’s Habitat for the Wild and Rare plan as having the greatest concentration of “Species of Greatest Conservation Need.” Priority is land of high biodiversity significance and sensitive ravines that impact water quality leading into the St. Croix National Scenic Riverway. Land acquired would be added to Franconia Bluffs SNA.

- **Keystone Woods and Carnelian Creek Area:** In the forested areas of northern Washington County, The Trust for Public Land is working with landowners to protect lakeshore and high biodiversity wetlands and uplands. The MCBS has identified large portions of this land as having high biodiversity significance, including aspen-oak stands, oak openings and barrens, Big Woods, wet prairie, conifer bogs and swamps. MNDNR's Natural Heritage Database contains fourteen records of rare plant communities, plant species and animal species, including Blanding's turtle and Red-Shouldered Hawk. These areas are a high priority for protection for Washington County. The Keystone Woods Area could either become a new SNA or County park land. The Carnelian Creek Area would become County park land.

III. OVERALL PROJECT STATUS UPDATES:

Project Status as of February 1, 2016:

Project Status as of August 1, 2016:

Project Status as of February 1, 2017:

Project Status as of August 1, 2017:

Project Status as of February 1, 2018:

Project Status as of August 1, 2018:

Overall Project Outcomes and Results:

IV. PROJECT ACTIVITIES AND OUTCOMES:

ACTIVITY 1: Strategic protection of fee title lands in the greater Twin Cities Metro Area, specifically Washington and Chisago Counties

Description: Acquire land in fee title and convey it into public ownership for stewardship and protection. Please see attached Acquisition List showing the lands that may be acquired in part with funding from this request. TPL will prioritize potential land protection projects within the Metro Conservation Corridors based on the priorities established by the public agencies with which we work and on landowner willingness to sell. TPL will provide references to adopted plans in which acquisitions have been included. Priority will also be given to high quality natural resources and on lands that provide natural buffers to water resources. We will also consider resource mapping, stakeholder suggestions, and joint recommendations made by the coalition of groups involved in this overall effort. TPL will work with the long-term steward to ensure a restoration and management plan consistent with the highest quality conservation and ecological goals for the site is developed and that funding is identified for creation of a management plan.

For each fee title acquisition, TPL will:

1. Seek County board approval for each acquisition going to DNR
2. Ensure a restoration and management plan is prepared for each acquisition
3. Identify funding source to implement such plans
4. Provide or have the final title holder provide an analysis of increased operations and maintenance cost likely to be incurred and how these costs will be covered

Unless necessary to protect priority lands and subject to work plan amendment at that time, TPL will not acquire residential structures. Prior to acquiring property, The Trust for Public Land will also (a) obtain written permission from the commissioner of natural resources, and (b) submit the most recent tax assessed value and most recent tax statement for the property and the amount intended to be offered for the property to the commission and the commissioner of natural resources.

Summary Budget Information for Activity 1:

ENRTF Budget: \$ 750,000
Amount Spent: \$ 0
Balance: \$ 750,000

| Outcome | Completion Date |
|---|-----------------|
| 1. <i>Approximately 35 acres of high quality habitat and 0.2 miles of shoreline protected through fee title acquisition</i> | 6/30/18 |

Activity Status as of February 1, 2016:

Activity Status as of August 1, 2016:

Activity Status as of February 1, 2017:

Activity Status as of August 1, 2017:

Activity Status as of February 1, 2018:

Activity Status as of August 1, 2018:

Final Report Summary:

V. DISSEMINATION:

Description: As conservation transactions are completed, The Trust for Public Land will disseminate information on the TPL website, www.tpl.org, broadcast emails to TPL list serve members, distribute press releases, and include information in TPL’s newsletters and publications as appropriate. TPL will also work with the long-term steward to ensure information is distributed to its list-serves and on its website as well.

Status as of February 1, 2016:

Status as of August 1, 2016:

Status as of February 1, 2017:

Status as of August 1, 2017:

Status as of February 1, 2018:

Status as of August 1, 2018:

Final Report Summary:

VI. PROJECT BUDGET SUMMARY:

A. ENRTF Budget Overview:

| Budget Category | \$ Amount | Overview Explanation |
|----------------------------|------------------|--|
| Fee Title Acquisition: | \$ 740,000 | Please see attached Acquisition List for acres and specific entities that will hold title to the land acquired |
| Other: | \$10,000 | Public Agency acquisition, reporting and management costs as needed |
| TOTAL ENRTF BUDGET: | \$750,000 | |

Explanation of Use of Classified Staff: N/A

Explanation of Capital Expenditures Greater Than \$5,000: N/A

Number of Full-time Equivalents (FTE) Directly Funded with this ENRTF Appropriation: N/A

Number of Full-time Equivalents (FTE) Estimated to Be Funded through Contracts with this ENRTF Appropriation: N/A

B. Other Funds:

| Source of Funds | \$ Amount Proposed | \$ Amount Spent | Use of Other Funds |
|--|--------------------|-----------------|---|
| Non-state | | | |
| Various local, federal and private funds | \$ 200,000 | \$ | Fee title acquisition. Note: This is an estimated amount based on previous acquisitions using ENRTF Funding |
| TOTAL OTHER FUNDS: | \$ 200,000 | \$ | |

VII. PROJECT STRATEGY:

A. Project Partners: The Trust for Public Land partners with the Metro Conservation Corridor organizations as well as with towns, counties, lakeshore associations, citizen groups and others to successfully acquire and permanently protect land. Agencies specifically ask for our help with protections because they lack staff, resources and capacity to do so. In the parcels identified above, the likely long term stewards will include: Washington County, and the DNR-SNA.

B. Project Impact and Long-term Strategy: These fee title acquisitions are part of a larger strategy of the Metro Conservation Corridors Partnership to conserve high quality habitat and connect corridors in the high growth area of Minnesota. The work of The Trust for Public Land and the MeCC Partnership is informed by state, regional and local plans to protect habitat and water quality. Conserving high quality habitat in the Metro area will require sustained effort for at least a generation. Metro Conservation Corridors Partners will continue to leverage funding and coordinate resources to achieve the long term vision of clean water and protected, restored land close to home for most Minnesotans. For every \$1.00 spent in ENTRF funding, the MeCC Partnership has leveraged \$3.76.

To date, the MeCC Partnership has protected over 11,000 acres, and 28 miles of sensitive shoreline. There are still over 80,000 acres of regionally significant natural areas in the Metro Region that are unprotected. The Trust

for Public Land will continue its work as long as critical habitat close to where so many Minnesotans live, work and play remains unprotected and in danger of degradation and loss.

C. Funding History:

| Funding Source and Use of Funds | Funding Timeframe | \$ Amount |
|---|--------------------------|-------------------------|
| ENRTF M.L. 2007, Chapter 30, Section 2, Subd 4c (Fee Acquisition) | FY 08-FY10 | \$420,000 |
| Local funding (Chisago City) | | \$690,000 |
| State bonding | | \$460,000 |
| Land value donations | | \$254,900 |
| Private funding (Private fundraising by TPL and others) | | \$73,600 |
| ENRTF M.L. 2008, Chapter 367, Section 2, Subd 3a (Fee acquisition) | FY 09-FY 11 | \$475,000 |
| State bonding (DNR non metro regional grant program) | | \$540,000 |
| Local funding | | \$810,000 |
| Land value donation | | \$294,300 |
| Private funding (private fundraising by TPL and others) | | \$86,400 |
| ENRTF M.L. 2009, Chapter 143, Section 2, Subd 4e (Fee Acquisition) | FY 10-FY12 | \$380,000 |
| Local funding (City of Lindstrom) | | \$300,000 |
| Local funding (Anoka County) | | \$46,500 |
| Local Funding ((Anoka County; OHF allocation to Anoka County,M.L. 2009, Chapter 172, Article 1, Section 2, subd 2g) | | \$285,000 |
| Land value donation | | \$78,000 |
| Other State funding (State remediation grant) | | \$500,000 |
| | | |
| ENTRF M.L. 2010, Chapter 362, Section 2, Subd 4g (Fee Acquisition) | FY 11-FY 13 | \$890,000 |
| Local Funding (Anoka County; OHF allocation to Anoka County,M.L. 2009, Chapter 172, Article 1, Section 2, subd 2g) | | \$1,615,000 |
| RIM | | \$300,000 |
| DNR – SNA bonding (2006) | | \$290,000 |
| Land value donations | | \$745,000 |
| OHF (M.L. 2010, Chapter 361, Article 1, Section 2, Subd 5a) | | \$1,500,000 |
| ENTRF M.L. 2011, 1st Special Session, Chapter 2, Subd 4i (Fee Acquisition) – \$500,000 allocated, not all spent yet | FY 12 – FY 15 | \$67,000 (spent) |
| Anoka County (OHF, M.L. 2010, Chapter 361, Article 1, Section2, Subd 2e) | | \$940,000 |
| Anoka County | | \$200,000 |

NOTE: Other sources of funds are allocated between phases (if there is more than one phase used for fee acquisitions)

VIII. FEE TITLE ACQUISITION/CONSERVATION EASEMENT/RESTORATION REQUIREMENTS:

A. Parcel List: See attached parcel list

B. Acquisition/Restoration Information:

Fee Title Acquisition

- 1. Describe the selection process for identifying and including proposed parcels on the parcel list, including explanation of the criteria and decision-making process used to rank and prioritize parcels.**

Within the Metro Conservation Corridors Partnership, key corridors have been identified through science based classifications, such the MN County Biological Survey, and GIS mapping. Lands are further prioritized using federal, state and local natural resource plans, focusing on lands with high biodiversity, connectivity, and ability to preserve habitat for Species of Greatest Conservation Need.

- 2. List all adopted state, regional, or local natural resource plans in which the lands included in the parcel list are identified. Include a link to the plan if one is available.**

- Tomorrow's Habitat for the Wild and Rare http://files.dnr.state.mn.us/assistance/nrplanning/bigpicture/cwcs/tomorrows_habitat.pdf
- Minnesota DNR Scientific and Natural Area's Long Range Plan <http://files.dnr.state.mn.us/aboutdnr/reports/strategic-documents/sna-system-plan2004.pdf>
- Minnesota DNR Strategic Conservation Agenda <http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/conservationagenda/index.html>
- Washington County Land and Water Legacy Program Conservation Priorities (and top 10 conservation priorities) <http://www.co.washington.mn.us/DocumentCenter/View/132> and <http://www.co.washington.mn.us/DocumentCenter/View/771>
- Minnesota DNR Nongame Wildlife Plans
- State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan http://files.dnr.state.mn.us/aboutdnr/reports/scorp_final_3308.pdf
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Strategic Habitat Conservation Model <http://www.fws.gov/landscape-conservation/shc.html>

- 3. For any parcels acquired in fee title, a restoration and management must be prepared. Summarize the components and expected outcomes of restoration and management plans for parcels acquired by your organization, how these plans are kept on file by your organization, and overall strategies for long-term plan implementation, including how long-term maintenance and management needs of the parcel will be financed into the future.**

TPL will work with the long-term steward to ensure a restoration and management plan consistent with the highest quality conservation and ecological goals for the site is developed and that funding is identified for creation of a management plan.

For each fee title acquisition, TPL will:

- a) Ensure a restoration and management plan is prepared for each acquisition
- b) Identify funding source to implement such plans
- c) Provide or have the final title holder provide an analysis of increased operations and maintenance cost likely to be incurred and how these costs will be covered

- 4. For each parcel to be conveyed to a State of Minnesota entity (e.g., DNR) after purchase, provide a statement confirming that county board approval will be obtained.**

For each fee title acquisition of a parcel to be conveyed to the DNR or other State of Minnesota entity, County Board approval will be obtained.

5. **If applicable (see M.S. 116P.17), provide a statement confirming that written approval from the DNR Commissioner will be obtained 10 business days prior to any final acquisition transaction.**

At least 10 days prior to acquiring property, The Trust for Public Land will obtain written permission from the Commissioner of Natural Resources.

IX. VISUAL COMPONENT or MAP(S): See attached map

X. RESEARCH ADDENDUM: N/A

XI. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS:

Periodic work plan status update reports will be submitted no later than February 2016, August 2016, February 2017, August 2017, February 2018, and August 2018. A final report and associated products will be submitted between June 30 and August 15, 2018.

**Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund
M.L. 2015 Project Budget**



Project Title: Metropolitan Conservation Corridors Phase VIII – Strategic Lands Protection
Legal Citation: M.L. 2015, Chp. 76, Sec. 2, Subd. 09f
Project Manager: Robert McGillivray
Organization: The Trust for Public Land
M.L. 2015 ENRTF Appropriation: \$750,000
Project Length and Completion Date: 3 Years, June 30, 2018
Date of Report: October 15, 2014

| ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES TRUST FUND BUDGET | Activity 1 Budget | Amount Spent | Activity 1 Balance | TOTAL BUDGET | TOTAL BALANCE |
|--|--|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------|----------------------|
| BUDGET ITEM | <i>Strategic Protection of fee title lands</i> | | | | |
| Fee Title Acquisition | | | | | |
| Estimated 35 acres of high quality habitat; likely long term owners will be Washington County and DNR-SNA | \$740,000 | \$0 | \$740,000 | \$740,000 | \$740,000 |
| Other | | | | | |
| DNR Acquisition costs/management plan, initial site development plan - only needed for acquisitions where DNR is permanent steward or DNR is performing appraisal review | \$10,000 | \$0 | \$10,000 | \$10,000 | \$10,000 |
| COLUMN TOTAL | \$750,000 | \$0 | \$750,000 | \$750,000 | \$750,000 |

Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund

M.L. 2015 Parcel List

Project Title: Metropolitan Conservation Corridors Phase VIII – Strategic Lands Protection

Legal Citation: M.L. 2015, Chp. 76, Sec. 2, Subd. 09f

Project Manager: Robert McGillivray

Organization: The Trust for Public Land

M.L. 2015 ENRTF Appropriation: \$750,000

Project Length and Completion Date: 3 Years, June 30, 2018

Date of Report: June 24, 2015

| # | Acquisition or Restoration Parcel Name | Geographic Coordinates Format: [Deg.]° [Min.]' [Sec.]" [Hemis.] | | Estimated Cost | Estimated Annual PILT Liabilities | County | Site Significance | Activity Description | # of Acres | # of Shoreline Miles | Type of Landowner | Proposed Fee Title or Easement Holder (if applicable) | Status |
|---|--|--|-----------|----------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------|--|----------------------|------------|----------------------|-------------------|---|--------|
| | | Latitude | Longitude | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1 | St. Croix/Franconia-Scandia SNA | 45 28'14 N | 92 76'66W | \$600,000 | | Washington or Chisago | Protection is targeted towards lands of high biodiversity significance adjacent to current protected lands and to sensitive ravines that impact the water quality leading into the St. Croix National Scenic Riverway. Protection here is supported by local, state and federal plans. | Fee Title | 80 | 0.5 | private | DNR-SNA | |
| 2 | Carnelian Creek Area | 45 17'35N | 92 82'09W | \$1,000,000 | | Washington | MLCSS classifies the area as having high quality tamarack swamp, oak forest, northern hardwood forest, aspen birch forest, maple basswood forest, prairie, grassland and wetlands. The MNDNR's Natural Heritage Database and MCBS contain fourteen records of rare or significant plant communities, plant species, and animal species in the area, including Blanding's Turtle, Red Shouldered Hawk, and Milk Snake. This area is one of Washington County's top conservation priorities. | Fee Title | 1000 | 2.5 | Private | Washington County | |
| 3 | Keystone Woods Area | 45 17'93N | 92 87'51W | \$1,500,000 | | Washington | MLCSS and MCBS identify this area as having high natural resource value, including mesic oak forest, dry oak forest, mixed emergent swamp, tamarack swamp, and wetlands. The following "Species in Greatest Conservation Need" exist in the area: Red-shouldered Hawk, Bald Eagle, Common Snapping Turtle, Blanding's Turtle, Fernleaf False Foxglove, and Bog Copper. This area is one of Washington County's top priorities for conservation. | Fee Title | 900+ | 1.5 | Private | DNR or Washington County | |

NOTES:



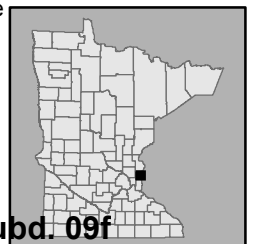
TPL'S STRATEGIC LAND PROTECTION PROGRAM- MECC 8 2015 FOCUS AREAS: CARNELIAN CREEK

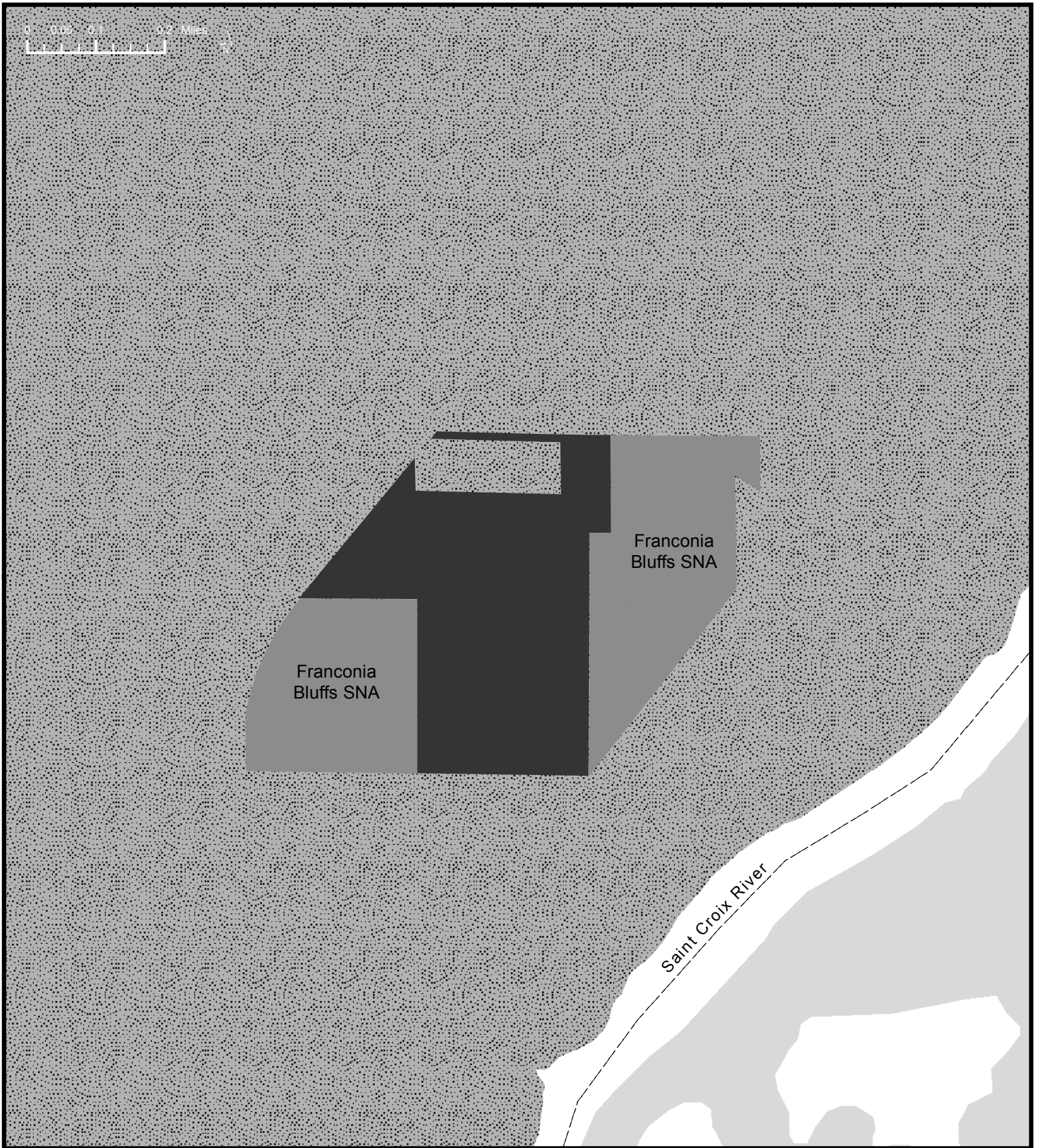
The parcels shown are potential acquisition areas only. They do not necessarily represent the specific lands that will be acquired. Actual acquisitions will be dependent on negotiations, planning, agency approvals, and funding levels.

Legend

- Water
- Trust for Public Land Focus Area Project
- Metro Conservation Corridors

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TPL's STRATEGIC LAND PROTECTION PROGRAM- MECC 8 2015 FOCUS AREAS: FRANCONIA SCANDIA SNA

The parcels shown are potential acquisition areas only. They do not necessarily represent the specific lands that will be acquired. Actual acquisitions will be dependent on negotiations, planning, agency approvals, and funding levels.

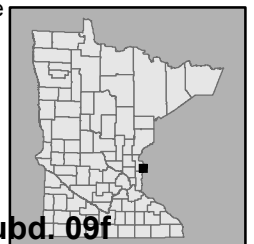
Legend

- Trust for Public Land Focus Area Project
- Franconia Bluffs SNA
- County Boundary
- Metro Conservation Corridors
- Water

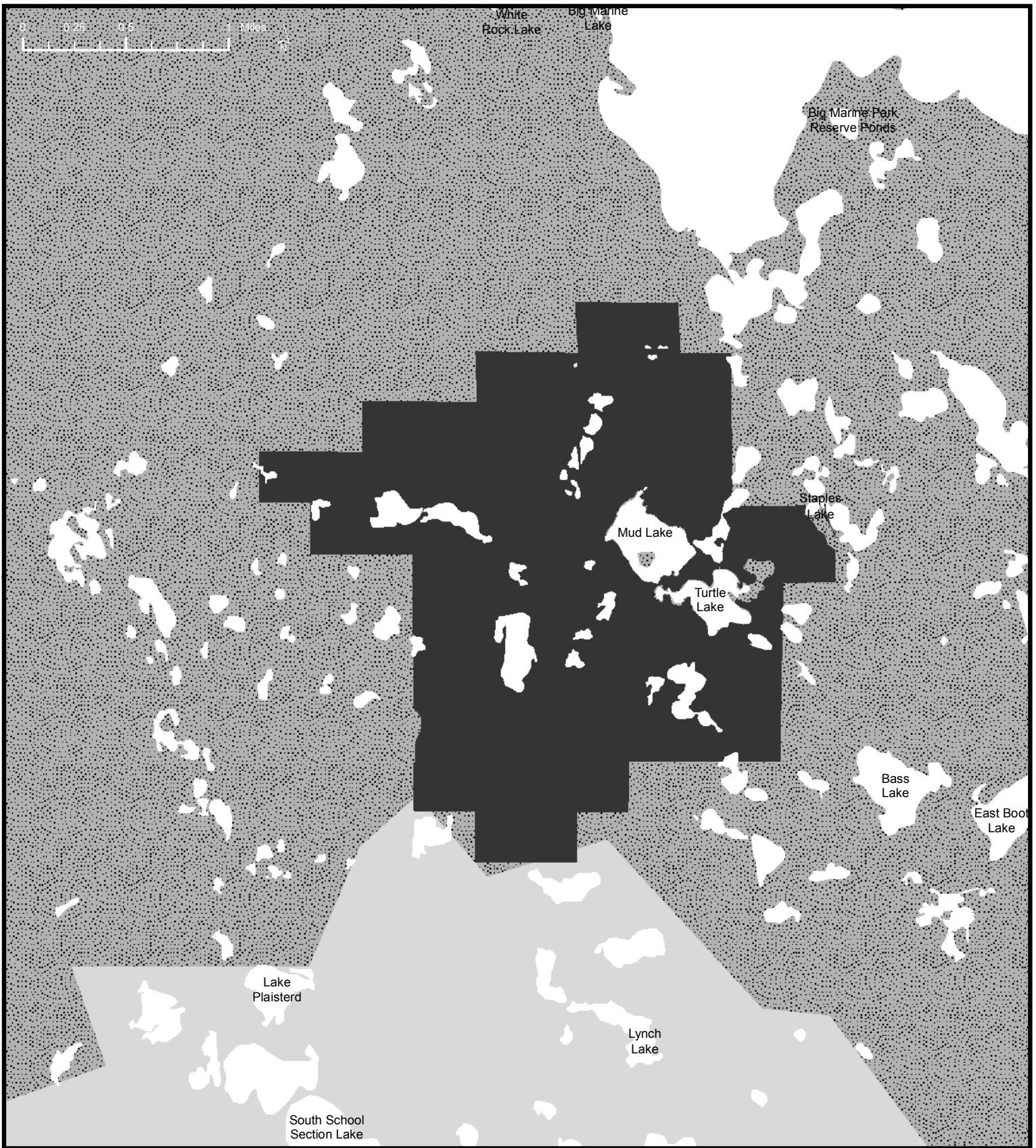
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06/24/2015



Subd. 09f



TPL's STRATEGIC LAND PROTECTION PROGRAM- MECC 8 2015 FOCUS AREAS: KEYSTONE WOODS

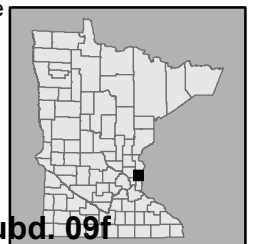
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Legend

- Water
- Trust for Public Land Focus Area Project
- Metro Conservation Corridors

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