



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

Date of Report: October 15, 2014

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: Metro Conservation Corridors Phase VIII – Priority Expansion of Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge

Project Manager: Deborah Loon

Organization: Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge Trust, Inc.

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Email Address: dloon@mnvalleytrust.org

Web Address: www.mnvalleytrust.org

Location: Carver, Hennepin, LeSueur, Scott and/or Sibley

Total ENRTF Project Budget:

ENRTF Appropriation: \$500,000

Amount Spent: \$0

Balance: \$500,000

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

Appropriation Language:

\$500,000 the first year is from the trust fund to the commissioner of natural resources for an agreement with the Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge Trust Inc. for the eighth phase of the Metropolitan Conservation Corridors partnership to acquire in fee at least 100 acres of priority habitat for the Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge 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. 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. This appropriation is available until June 30, 2018, by which time the project must be completed and final products delivered.

I. PROJECT TITLE: Metro Conservation Corridors Phase VIII – Priority Expansion of Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge

II. PROJECT STATEMENT: Minnesota Valley Trust (MVT) will protect through fee title acquisition 100 acres of priority habitat for the Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge (Refuge), as delineated by the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) in its Comprehensive Conservation Plan for the Refuge. MVT also will protect through fee title acquisition an additional 100 acres for the Refuge with other non-state funds, for a total of 200 acres. This work will be done by MVT as a partner in the Metro Conservation Corridors Phase VIII.

The Refuge units and lands to be acquired have been delineated and prioritized by the USFWS through a public planning process. The lands are primarily along the Minnesota River and include river frontage, floodplain and cropland.

Fee acquisition with ENRTF and other non-state funds through this project will provide the following ecologic and hydrologic benefits:

- Protect the diversity of native ecosystems and continue to improve ecosystem connectivity and resilience.
- Increase breeding and migratory habitat for waterfowl, shorebirds, neo-tropical migrants, and other species including non-migratory resident species.
- Provide valuable habitat for a host of pollinators. Croplands will be restored and grasslands enhanced with a myriad of native forb and pollen species, providing diverse pollen and nectar sources for more than 50 species of bees, moths, and butterflies.
- Provide valuable wetland, prairie and floodplain forest habitat for up to 19 state-listed threatened and endangered species.
- Improve water quality by retiring and restoring croplands in the Minnesota River Valley to the natural habitats of floodplain forest, wetlands and prairie.
- Expand the public’s access to lands in and very near the Twin Cities metropolitan area for wildlife-dependent recreational activities, such as birding, photography, hiking, wildlife observation and interpretation, conservation education, hunting and fishing.

This project will leverage other non-state funds available for Refuge expansion and build upon the ENRTF investment through prior phases of Metropolitan Conservation Corridors.

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:

Overall Project Outcomes and Results:

IV. PROJECT ACTIVITIES AND OUTCOMES:

ACTIVITY 1:

Description: At least 100 acres of priority lands will be acquired in fee title with the ENRTF grant for one or more of the following delineated units of the Refuge – Blakely Unit (Scott & LeSueur Counties), Jessenland Unit

(Sibley and Le Sueur Counties), Louisville Swamp Unit (Scott County), St. Lawrence Unit (Scott County), San Francisco Unit (Carver County) and Upgrala Unit (Hennepin County). The MVT works with landowners within those delineated units who are interested in selling their land for inclusion in the Refuge. The local units of government in these identified areas are aware and supportive of the work to complete the Refuge within its authorized boundaries.

An additional 100 acres will be acquired for the Refuge by the Trust using other non-state funds. The MVT and USFWS will develop a restoration, enhancement and management plan, then restore and enhance the floodplain forest, wetlands and prairie. Cropland will be retired and drain tile broken, as applicable. This restoration, enhancement and management work will be completed with other funds.

Following restoration and enhancement, 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.

The ENRTF grant funds will be used for the fee title acquisition only; all acquisition-related costs, including professional fees, and costs related to restoration, enhancement and management will be paid by other funds.

Summary Budget Information for Activity 1:

ENRTF Budget: \$500,000
Amount Spent: \$ 0
Balance: \$500,000

Outcome	Completion Date
1. At least 100 acres acquired in fee for MN Valley National Wildlife Refuge	June 30, 2018

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:

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, 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:

Final Report Summary:

VI. PROJECT BUDGET SUMMARY:

A. ENRTF Budget Overview:

Budget Category	\$ Amount	Overview Explanation
Fee Title Acquisition:	\$ 500,000	At least 100 acres for MN Valley National Wildlife Refuge to be held in title by USFWS
TOTAL ENRTF BUDGET:	\$ 500,000	

Explanation of Use of Classified Staff: NA

Explanation of Capital Expenditures Greater Than \$5,000: NA

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

Number of Full-time Equivalents (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	\$ 500,000	\$	At least 100 additional acres acquired in fee for Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge
State	\$ 0		
TOTAL OTHER FUNDS:	\$ 500,000	\$	

VII. PROJECT STRATEGY:

A. Project Partners: The Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge Trust, Inc. will manage and complete this project. MVT will work in close coordination with the Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge of the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) in selecting the parcel(s) to acquire in accordance with the Comprehensive Conservation Plan for the Refuge, conducting environmental reviews, and developing restoration and management plans. The MN Valley Trust also coordinates with its partners in the Metropolitan Conservation Corridors Partnership. Additional partners will include applicable local units of government, the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, and other non-profit partners.

B. Project Impact and Long-term Strategy: The fee title acquisition activities are part of a larger strategy to expand and complete the Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge according to a plan developed by the USFWS (see Comprehensive Conservation Plan for the Refuge). To-date, the Minnesota Valley Trust has acquired 5,076 acres for the Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge and Wetland Management District, of which 3,004 acres were specifically for the Refuge.

The authorized boundaries of the Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge today total 29,133 acres. Currently, 14,010 acres are under the Refuge’s ownership or management. Acquisition of the remaining 15,123 acres over time will complete the Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge. These 15,123 acres make up the search area for the Minnesota Valley Trust.

Funding for this work has and will continue to include a combination of federal, state and private sources.

C. Funding History: Note – This chart includes private and other public non-state funds that are associated with the acquisitions to which the state grant funds were applied. It does not include private and other funds used to acquire lands in which state grants were not involved.

Funding Source and Use of Funds	Funding Timeframe	\$ Amount
Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund – ML 2003, Fee title acquisition for Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge (MeCC Phase I)	July 1, 2003 – June 30, 2006	\$ 290,000
MN Valley Trust (private) funds spent concurrently with above ENRTF grant on this acquisition		\$ 548,077
Natural Resources Conservation Service (federal) funds spent concurrently with above ENRTF grant on this acquisition		\$ 579,092
Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund – ML 2005, Fee title acquisition for Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge (MeCC Phase II)	July 1, 2005 – June 30, 2008	\$ 230,000
MN Valley Trust (private) funds spent concurrently with above ENRTF grant on this acquisition		\$ 431,030
Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund – ML 2007, Fee title acquisition for Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge (MeCC Phase III)	July 1, 2007 – June 30, 2009	\$ 210,000
MN Valley Trust (private) funds spent concurrently with above ENRTF grant on this acquisition		\$ 92,099
Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund – ML 2008, Fee title acquisition for Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge (MeCC Phase IV)	July 1, 2008 – June 30, 2010	\$ 225,000
MN Valley Trust (private) funds spent concurrently with above ENRTF grant on this and another acquisition		\$ 130,957
North American Wetland Conservation Act (federal) funds spent concurrently with above ENRTF grant on this acquisition		\$ 75,000
Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund – ML 2009, Fee title acquisition for Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge (MeCC Phase V)	July 1, 2009 – June 30, 2011	\$ 225,000
MN Valley Trust (private) funds spent concurrently with above ENRTF grant on this and another acquisition		\$ 153,655
Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund – ML 2010, Fee title acquisition for Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge (MeCC Phase V Supplemental)	July 1, 2010 – June 30, 2012	\$ 325,000
MN Valley Trust (private) funds spent concurrently with above ENRTF grant on this and two other acquisitions		\$ 335,857
Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund – ML 2011, Fee title acquisition for Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge (MeCC Phase VI)	July 1, 2011 – June 30, 2014	\$ 600,000
MN Valley Trust (private) funds spent concurrently with above		

ENRTF grant on this acquisition		
Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund – ML 2013, Fee title acquisition for Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge (MeCC Phase VII)	July 1, 2013 – June 30, 2016	\$ 400,000
MN Valley Trust (private) funds spent concurrently with above ENRTF grant on this acquisition		
Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund – ML 2003, Fee title acquisition for Minnesota Valley Wetland Management District (HCP Phase II)	July 1, 2003 – June 30, 2006	\$ 98,300
Minnesota Valley Trust (private) funds spent concurrently with above ENRTF grant		\$ 267,380
Small Wetland Acquisition Program (federal) funds spent concurrently with above ENRTF grant		\$ 479,300
Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund – ML 2005, Fee title acquisition for Minnesota Valley Wetland Management District (HCP Phase III)	July 1, 2005 – June 30, 2008	\$ 126,878
Minnesota Valley Trust (private) funds spent concurrently with above ENRTF grant		\$1,696,309
Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund – ML 2007, Fee title acquisition for Minnesota Valley Wetland Management District (HCP Phase IV)	July 1, 2007 – June 30, 2009	\$ 100,000
Minnesota Valley Trust (private) funds spent concurrently with above ENRTF grant		\$ 237,171
Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund – ML 2008, Fee title acquisition for Minnesota Valley Wetland Management District (HCP Phase V)	July 1, 2008 – June 30, 2010	\$ 50,000
Minnesota Valley Trust (private) funds spent concurrently with above ENRTF grant		\$ 81,200
Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund – ML 2009, Fee title acquisition for Minnesota Valley Wetland Management District (HCP Phase VI)	July 1, 2009 – June 30, 2012	\$ 100,000
Minnesota Valley Trust (private) funds spent concurrently with above ENRTF grant		\$ 277,762
Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund – ML 2010, Fee title acquisition for Minnesota Valley Wetland Management District (HCP Phase VII)	July 1, 2010 – June 30, 2014	\$ 400,000
Minnesota Valley Trust (private) funds spent concurrently with above ENRTF grant		\$ 693,653
Outdoor Heritage Fund – ML 2010, Fee title acquisition for the Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge (Metro Big Rivers Partnership, Phase 1)	July 1, 2010 – June 30, 2012	\$ 500,000

Minnesota Valley Trust (private) funds spent concurrently with above OHF grant		\$ 347,527
Outdoor Heritage Fund – ML 2011, Fee title acquisition for the Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge (Metro Big Rivers Partnership, Phase 2)	July 1, 2011 – June 30, 2013	\$ 960,000
Minnesota Valley Trust (private) funds spent concurrently with above OHF grant		\$ 150,025

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

A. Parcel List: Attached.

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.** The Minnesota Valley Trust, Inc. works to acquire land within clear boundaries established for the Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge through the USFWS’ Comprehensive Conservation Planning process. We work with willing landowners within those boundaries as those landowners step forward with interest or respond to our outreach.
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.** The Comprehensive Conservation Plan is the primary plan that guides the land acquisition work of the Minnesota Valley Trust -- <http://www.fws.gov/midwest/planning/MinnesotaValley/index.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.** The USFWS will develop the restoration and management plans for parcels acquired by the Minnesota Valley Trust under this grant. The plans will be appropriate to restore and enhance, then maintain, the types of habitats acquired. The long-term maintenance and management needs of the land will be the responsibility of the USFWS. The Minnesota Valley Trust will finance the initial restoration and enhancement prior to donating the land to the USFWS, and will also help support the ongoing management, as needed.
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.** Not applicable.
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.** Written approval from the DNR Commissioner will be obtained at least 10 business days prior to any final acquisition transaction.

IX. VISUAL COMPONENT or MAP(S): See attached maps showing the private lands within the boundaries of the Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge. These private lands are the focus of our land acquisition efforts.

X. RESEARCH ADDENDUM: NA

XI. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS:

Periodic work plan status update reports will be submitted no later than February 1, 2016; August 1, 2016; February 1, 2017; August 1, 2017, and February 1, 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: Metro Conservation Corridors Phase VIII – Priority Expansion of Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge

Legal Citation: M.L. 2015, Ch. xx, Sec. xx, Subd. Xx

Project Manager: Deborah Loon

Organization: Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge Trust, Inc.

M.L. 2015 ENRTF Appropriation: \$ 500,000

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>Fee Title Acquisition</i>				
Fee Title Acquisition	\$500,000	\$0	\$500,000	\$500,000	\$500,000
1-3 parcels totaling 100 acres for the MN Valley National Wildlife Refuge. Land acquired will be donated to the US Fish and Wildlife Service.					
COLUMN TOTAL	\$500,000	\$0	\$500,000	\$500,000	\$500,000

Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund

2015 Acquisition/Restoration List

Project Title: Metro Conservation Corridors Phase VIII – Priority Expansion of Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge

Project Manager Name: Deborah Loon, Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge Trust, Inc.

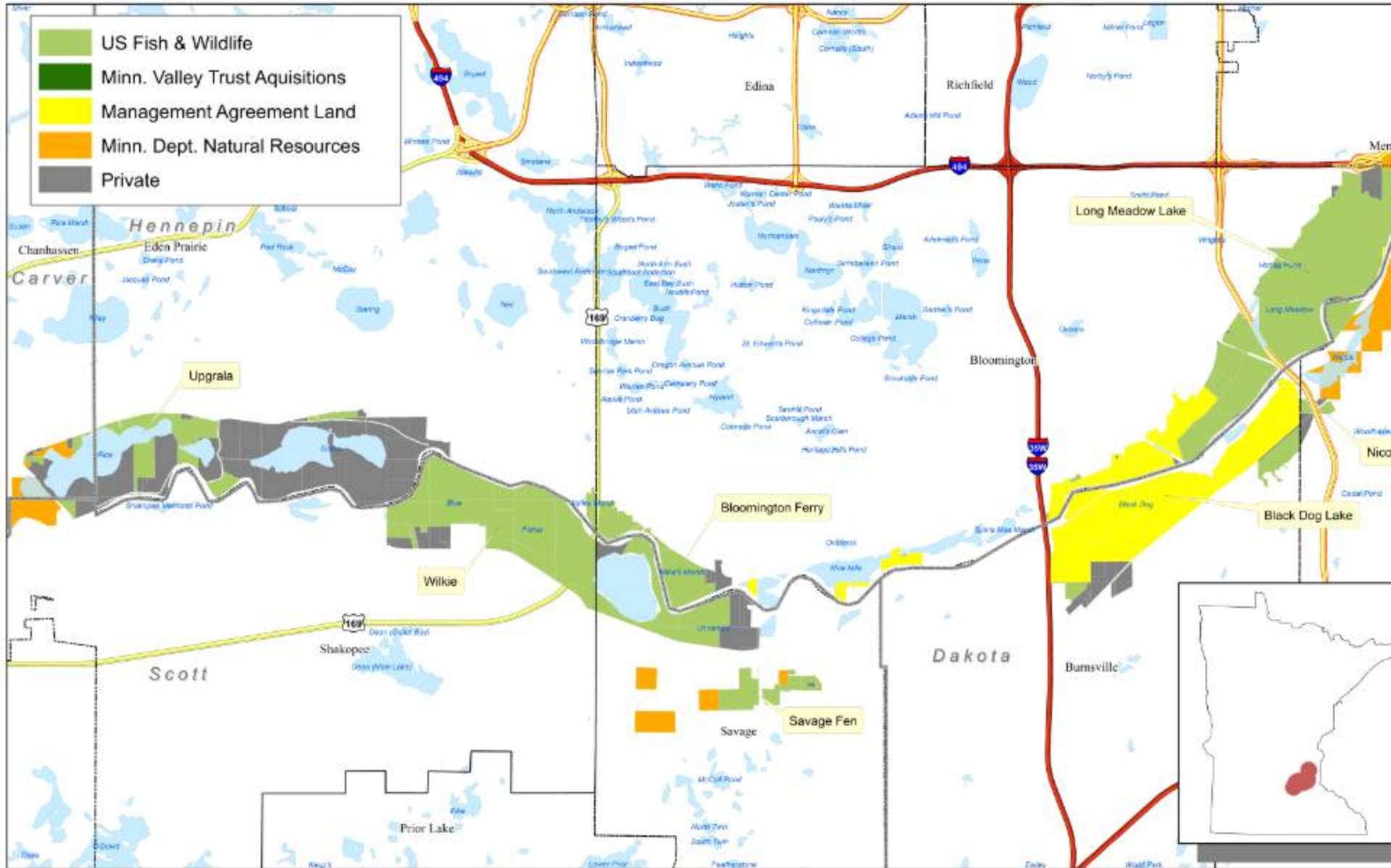
ENRTF \$ Request: \$500,000

#	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	Blakely Unit Expansion, MVNWR	44°34'40"N	93°52'29"W	\$ 500,000	\$ -	Scott	Floodplain forest, wetland and prairie; Minnesota River frontage; protected and enhanced to improve wildlife habitat and public wildlife-dependent recreation	Fee Title Acquisition	100	TBD	Private individual / trust	See note 2	
2	Jessenland Unit Expansion, MVNWR	44°34'28"N	93°54'20"W	\$ 500,000	\$ -	Sibley	Floodplain forest, wetland and prairie; Minnesota River frontage; protected and enhanced to improve wildlife habitat and public wildlife-dependent recreation	Fee Title Acquisition	100	TBD	Private individual / trust	See note 2	
	Louisville Swamp Unit Expansion, MVNWR	44°43'32"N	93°37'08"W	\$ 500,000	\$ -	Scott	Floodplain Forest, oak savanna, wetland, and prairie; Minnesota River frontage; protected and enhanced to improve wildlife habitat and public wildlife-dependent recreation	Fee Title Acquisition	100	TBD	Private individual / trust	See note 2	
3	St. Lawrence Unit Expansion, MVNWR	44°39'01"N	93°42'13"W	\$ 500,000	\$ -	Scott	Wetland and prairie; Minnesota River watershed; protected and enhanced to improve wildlife habitat and public wildlife-dependent recreation	Fee Title Acquisition	100	0	Private individual / trust	See note 2	
4	San Francisco Unit Expansion, MVNWR	44°41'34"N	93°40'50"W	\$ 500,000	\$ -	Carver	Floodplain forest, wetland and prairie; Minnesota River frontage; protected and enhanced to improve wildlife habitat and public wildlife-dependent recreation	Fee Title Acquisition	100	TBD	Private individual / trust	See note 2	
4	Upgrala Unit Expansion, MVNWR	44°48'40"N	93°28'56"W	\$ 500,000	\$ -	Hennepin	Floodplain forest, wetland and prairie; Minnesota River frontage; protected and enhanced to improve wildlife habitat and public wildlife-dependent recreation	Fee Title Acquisition	100	TBD	Private individual / trust or LLC	See note 2	

NOTES: (1) Parcel search areas are within the Refuge 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. (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.



Minnesota Valley Expansion





Minnesota Valley Expansion

- US Fish & Wildlife
- Minn. Valley Trust Aquisitions
- Management Agreement Land
- Minn. Dept. Natural Resources
- Private

