



# Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund (ENRTF) M.L. 2017 LCCMR Work Plan

**Date of Submission:** October 19, 2016

**Date of Next Status Update Report:** March 1, 2018

**Date of Work Plan Approval:**

**Project Completion Date:** June 30, 2020

**Does this submission include an amendment request?**

**PROJECT TITLE:** Native Prairie Stewardship & Prairie Bank Easement Acquisition

**Project Manager:** Judy Schulte

**Organization:** MN DNR – SNA Program

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**Location:** Statewide

**Total ENRTF Project Budget:**

**ENRTF Appropriation:** \$3,500,000

**Amount Spent:** \$0

**Balance:** \$3,500,000

**Legal Citation:** M.L. 2017, Chp. xx, Sec. xx, Subd. xx

**Appropriation Language:**

*[To be inserted following the MN Legislative Session in Spring 2017. This will be blank for the initial submission and will be provided to you at a later date.]*

**I. PROJECT TITLE:** Native Prairie Stewardship and Prairie Bank Easement Acquisition

**II. PROJECT STATEMENT:**

Native prairie will be permanently protected and conservation actions by prairie landowners will be increased through a suite of tools offered by the DNR Scientific and Natural Area (SNA) Program. Of Minnesota’s 235,000 acres of remaining native prairie, about 100,000 acres have no form of protection. Threats to native prairie are widespread including cropland conversion, mining, development, invasive species, woody encroachment and non-prairie focused land use/management. Since native prairie is a fragile, unique natural resource that provides exceptional water quality, wildlife and pollinator benefits, these threats are extremely disheartening. The MN Prairie Conservation Plan provides a road map for all partners to pursue the protection of all remaining native prairie over the next 20 years – this project is one of those efforts. About 335 acres of native prairie will be permanently protected through acquisition of Native Prairie Bank (NPB) conservation easements with priority given to high quality prairie identified by the Minnesota Biological Survey (MBS). The current landowner “waiting list” for NPB includes over 85 projects for over 5200 acres with an estimated easement value of over 14 million dollars. Native prairie restoration and enhancement activities will be implemented on about 570 acres of NPBs threatened by invasive species and lack of natural disturbance regimes. Enrollment will be accelerated in Native Prairie Tax Exemption through outreach and the creation of a web-based online application process. Prairie technical assistance will be provided to landowners and practitioners including a new “Prairie Landowner Network” created to increase cooperation among prairie landowners.

**III. OVERALL PROJECT STATUS UPDATES:**

**Project Status as of November 1, 2017:**

**Project Status as of March 1, 2018:**

**Project Status as of September 1, 2018:**

**Project Status as of March 1, 2019:**

**Project Status as of September 1, 2019:**

**Project Status as of March 1, 2020:**

**Overall Project Outcomes and Results:**

**IV. PROJECT ACTIVITIES AND OUTCOMES:**

**ACTIVITY 1: NPB Acquisition of Prairie of Biodiversity Significance**

**Description:** DNR-administered NPB conservation easements will be acquired on about 335 acres of high quality native prairie, which will include no more than 15% non-prairie necessary to improve prairie management. Payment rates are determined by authorizing law, M.S. 84.96, as applied according to policies of the Department of Natural Resources and the Board of Water and Soils Resources. Conservation easement baseline reports will be completed on 20 NPBs, including all of those acquired with this funding. Monitoring will be done on 20 NPB easements. Priority sites for acquisition are identified by MBS which target rare and endangered plant and animal species, high quality plant communities, and key habitats for Species in Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN). If needed, restoration will be completed on newly acquired lands using a combination of funds from Activity 2 below and/or other state appropriations. Only about 10 of the 335 acres acquired are expected to need restoration.

**Summary Budget Information for Activity 1:**

**ENRTF Budget: \$ 1,852,160**  
**Amount Spent: \$ 0**  
**Balance: \$ 1,852,160**

<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Completion Date</b>
1. acquisition of about 335 acres NPB conservation easements	6/30/2020
2. ~20 baseline property reports for NPB easements	6/30/2020
3. monitoring and stewardship of ~20 NPB easements	6/30/2020

**Activity 1 Status as of November 1, 2017:**

**Activity 1 Status as of March 1, 2018:**

**Activity 1 Status as of September 1, 2018:**

**Activity 1 Status as of March 1, 2019:**

**Activity 1 Status as of September 1, 2019:**

**Activity 1 Status as of March 1, 2020:**

**Final Report Summary:**

**ACTIVITY 2: Long-Term Easement Stewardship**

**Description:** The policy of the DNR is to protect both the conservation values of the property protected by these easements and the investment of the state in those interests. Elements of this stewardship include the creation of baseline property reports, enforcement protocols, regular compliance monitoring, record keeping and reporting, and maintaining effective working relationships with the owners of these easement properties. Native Prairie Bank implements this policy by following DNR Operational Order #128 "Conservation Easement Stewardship" in addition to the "Ecological and Water Resources Division Conservation Easement Stewardship Plan and Guidelines". This operational order and supporting division guidance calls for annual landowner contacts as well as on-the-ground site evaluations once every three years if no violations are found. If a violation is found, monitoring would occur annually until the violation is corrected.

Budgeted into this work plan is funding to be deposited into the DNR's Conservation Easement Stewardship Account dedicated to the perpetual monitoring and enforcement of conservation easements. The dedicated stewardship funds will provide the support needed for long-term, ongoing monitoring and minor enforcement activities of Native Prairie Bank easements acquired under this proposal. For Native Prairie Bank easements, the DNR has estimated that annual expenses for each project and the investment needed to generate annual income sufficient to cover these expenses in perpetuity.

**Summary Budget Information for Activity 2:**

**ENRTF Budget: \$ 132,000**  
**Amount Spent: \$ 0**  
**Balance: \$ 132,000**

<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Completion Date</b>
1. dollars deposited into conservation easement stewardship account (~6 easements)	6/30/2020

**Activity 2 Status as of November 1, 2017:**

**Activity 2 Status as of March 1, 2018:**

**Activity 2 Status as of September 1, 2018:**

**Activity 2 Status as of March 1, 2019:**

**Activity 2 Status as of September 1, 2019:**

**Activity 2 Status as of March 1, 2020:**

**Final Report Summary:**

**ACTIVITY 3: Native Prairie Restoration & Enhancement**

**Description:** Restoration and enhancement activities, based on the best scientific and technical knowledge, will be completed on about 570 acres. Activities include seed collection, site preparation, planting, invasive species treatment, woody species removal, boundary signing, site cleanup, prescribed burns (or alternative prescribed disturbance, such as haying, mowing or grazing, where appropriate) and monitoring. All restorations will use seeds/plants of local ecotypes, collected from onsite or within 30 miles. Adaptive Management Monitoring will occur at 14 NPB sites to evaluate whether the objectives of management were met and to contribute to future management decisions. Restoration and enhancement activities would be carried out via landowner agreements, DNR staff, Conservation Corps MN (CCM), volunteers, and/or contractors.

**Summary Budget Information for Activity 3:**

**ENRTF Budget: \$ 821,898**  
**Amount Spent: \$ 0**  
**Balance: \$ 821,898**

<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Completion Date</b>
1. ~10 acres of prairie reconstruction (restoration)	6/30/2020
2. ~200 acres of woody removal & invasive species treatment	6/30/2020
3. ~360 acres of prescribed burns	6/30/2020
4. NPB easement boundary signs & development work on ~10 NPB sites	6/30/2020
5. adaptive management monitoring on ~14 NPB sites	6/30/2020

**Activity 3 Status as of November 1, 2017:**

**Activity 3 Status as of March 1, 2018:**

**Activity 3 Status as of September 1, 2018:**

**Activity 3 Status as of March 1, 2019:**

**Activity 3 Status as of September 1, 2019:**

**Activity 3 Status as of March 1, 2020:**

**Final Report Summary:**

**ACTIVITY 4: Native Prairie Landowner Assistance & Incentives**

**Description:** Private landowners and other practitioners will increase their stewardship of native prairie through workshops, field days, one-on-one consultations, and other strategies. Federal funds will be leveraged in the creation and distribution of Landowner Handbooks, which will provide guidance and expertise to landowners of prairie and forest lands in the prairie subsections of Minnesota. A Prairie Landowner Network will be established in cooperation with Conservation Corps of Minnesota as a new innovative way to connect prairie landowners through U.S. mail, social media, email, newsletters, training opportunities, etc. This network is aimed at improving prairie quality on private lands by keeping landowners up-to-date on the best science-based management strategies. At least 20 landowners will receive a comprehensive prairie stewardship plan that will provide specific prairie condition, protection and management expertise for their property. Landowner enrollment in Native Prairie Tax Exemption will be increased to conserve and improve management on native prairie acres which may not yet be protected permanently through other means. An online Prairie Tax Exemption application system will be created to allow private landowners to apply online in addition to providing online access to county assessors and DNR staff to improve the certification process.

**Summary Budget Information for Activity 4:**

**ENRTF Budget: \$ 693,942**  
**Amount Spent: \$ 0**  
**Balance: \$ 693,942**

<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Completion Date</b>
<b>1. ~8 workshops/field days for prairie landowners &amp; practitioners (~600 people)</b>	6/30/2020
<b>2. consultations, guidance, mgmt. asst., etc. to ~80 landowners</b>	6/30/2020
<b>3. 3 Prairie Subsection Landowner Handbooks (~10,000 copies plus web access)</b>	6/30/2020
<b>4. Establish Prairie Landowner Network (reach out to 1,000 landowners)</b>	6/30/2020
<b>5. ~20 prairie stewardship plans provided to prairie landowners (~1500 acres)</b>	6/30/2020
<b>6. ~30 new enrollees in Native Prairie Tax Exemption via new web-app.</b>	6/30/2020

**Activity 4 Status as of November 1, 2017:**

**Activity 4 Status as of March 1, 2018:**

**Activity 4 Status as of September 1, 2018:**

**Activity 4 Status as of March 1, 2019:**

**Activity 4 Status as of September 1, 2019:**

**Activity 4 Status as of March 1, 2020:**

**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](#), and advertised locally via mailings and flyer postings. U.S. mailings, social media, email, and newsletters will be created and distributed

to prairie landowners as part of the creation of the Prairie Landowner Network. Landowner Handbooks will be made available to landowners online and at multiple outreach events.

Status as of November 1, 2017:

Status as of March 1, 2018:

Status as of September 1, 2018:

Status as of March 1, 2019:

Status as of September 1, 2019:

Status as of March 1, 2020:

Final Report Summary:

**VI. PROJECT BUDGET SUMMARY:**

**A. Preliminary ENRTF Budget Overview:**

**\*This section represents an overview of the preliminary budget at the start of the project. It will be reconciled with actual expenditures at the time of the final report.**

Budget Category	\$ Amount	Overview Explanation
Personnel:	\$ 918,268	Acquisition and Management Coordinators & Prairie Biologist (0.6 FTE spread across 4 people for 2-yrs)=~\$99,500 Specialist and Technician (5.0 FTE spread across 6 people for 2-yrs)=~\$709,968 Laborer and seasonal crews (1.5 FTE spread across 3-5 people for 2-yrs)=~\$108,800
Professional/Technical/Service Contracts:	\$ 534,000	<b>Professional/technical Contractors:</b> the state bid process will be used for adaptive management monitoring, landowner handbook writing services and the development of Prairie Stewardship Plans (~\$205,000). CCM Individual Placement will occur to aid in the creation of the Prairie Tax Exemption Online System and the Prairie Landowner Network (~\$76,000) <b>Service contracts:</b> will use CCM or the state bid process for completing prairie restoration/reconstruction, woody encroachment removal & exotics control, and prescribed burning/mowing projects (\$253,000).
Equipment/Tools/Supplies:	\$ 49,374	Supplies, parts, tools, repair costs & supplies for restoration and enhancement, including safety items, hand tools, etc.; signs & posts; workshop & event supplies

Easement Acquisition:	\$ 1,340,000	Estimate securing about 6 easements for 335 acres that will be held by the MN DNR - SNA Program
Long-Term Easement Stewardship	\$ 132,000	Funds will be deposited into conservation easement account dedicated to the perpetual monitoring and enforcement of conservation easements
Professional Services for Acquisition:	\$ 180,000	Attorney General's Office and DNR Lands and Minerals costs associated with completing an acquisition; anticipate about 6 transactions; cost/transaction vary between projects.
Printing:	\$20,600	Printing of baseline property reports, materials for workshops and field days and prairie stewardship plans (~\$4,600). Printing of ~10,000 Landowner Handbooks (~\$16,000)
Travel Expenses in MN:	\$ 179,400	Fleet charges for trucks, cars, & equipment, e.g. mowers, seeders; mileage, lodging & meals as per state contracts
Other: CCM Individual Placement Office Costs	\$2,000	Computer monthly charges for CCM individual placement position
Other: Landowner Handbook	\$15,000	DNR Creative Services Graphic Design for creation of Landowner Handbooks (Activity 3 Outcome 3)
Other: Prairie Tax Exemption Online System	\$30,000	MNIT Services assistance in the creation of an online application system (Activity 3 Outcome 6)
Other: Direct & Necessary Costs:	\$99,358	*DNR costs for the appropriation, see below
<b>TOTAL ENRTF BUDGET:</b>		<b>\$3,500,000</b>

\*Direct and Necessary expenses include Department Support Services (Human Resources, IT Support, Safety, Financial Support, Communications Support, Planning Support, and Procurement Support). Department Support Services are described in the agency Service Level Agreement, and billed internally to divisions based on rates that have been developed for each area of service. These services are directly related to and necessary for the appropriation. Department leadership services (Commissioner's Office and Regional Directors) are not assessed. Those elements of individual projects that put little or no demand on support services such as large single-source contracts, land acquisitions (landowner payments & transaction costs), and funds that are passed-thru to other entities are not assessed Direct and Necessary costs for those activities. For this work plan, CCM contracts (~\$137,000), MNIT service level agreement (~\$30,000) and DNR Creative Services (~\$15,000), Long-Term Easement Stewardship (~132,000), Easement Acquisition (~\$1,340,000) and Professional Services for Acquisition (~\$180,000) have not been assessed Direct and Necessary costs. In addition to itemized costs captured in our proposal budget, direct and necessary costs cover HR Support (~\$20,888), Safety Support (~\$5,850), Financial Support (~\$21,933), Communication Support (~\$5,264), IT Support (~\$40,986), Planning Support (~\$3,648), and Procurement Support (~\$788) that are necessary to accomplishing funded programs/projects.

**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.

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

**Total Number of Full-time Equivalent (FTE) Directly Funded with this ENRTF Appropriation:** A total of 14.2 FTE's spread across 13-15 different people.

**Total Number of Full-time Equivalent (FTE) Estimated to Be Funded through Contracts with this ENRTF Appropriation:** How many employees a future contractor will use, the hours they will work, or what salary they may pay their employees is not known. What is known is that \$534,000 in contracts will be executed.

**B. Other Funds:**

Source of Funds	\$ Amount Proposed	\$ Amount Spent	Use of Other Funds
Non-state	\$30,000	\$0	Federal forestry match of \$30,000 will be used in the creation of the 3 Prairie Section Landowner Handbooks. Additionally, landowners often contribute towards management activities, these costs will not tracked.
State	\$3,000	\$0	CCM Individual Placement office space rent, desk, chair
State	\$0**	\$0**	Some NPB acquisitions are funded with a combination of state appropriations (e.g. OHF and Critical Habitat Match). If any other funds are used for landowner payments for acquisitions funded in part with this appropriation, accomplishments will be pro-rated by the actual expenditures per funding source.
<b>TOTAL OTHER FUNDS:</b>	<b>\$33,000</b>	<b>\$0</b>	

\*\* As indicated below, Outdoor Heritage Fund appropriations for acquisition and prairie restoration and enhancement occur concurrently with this ENRTF appropriation. These OHF funds are used for similar but separate projects as the ENRTF funding. As of October 19, 2016, the Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council has recommend \$2,481,000 to Native Prairie Bank for acquisition and \$130,160 for prairie restoration and enhancement for ML 2017.

**VII. PROJECT STRATEGY:**

**A. Project Partners:**

**Partners NOT receiving ENRTF funding**

To accelerate efforts, the Native Prairie Bank Program is coordinating with Minnesota Prairie Plan partners and using the network of established Local Technical Teams (LTT's) to reach out to landowners and increase program enrollment. The LTT's are local staff from SWCD's, NRCS, DNR, USFWS, The Nature Conservancy and Pheasants Forever - to name a few. The LTT's have already begun cultivating relationships with prairie landowners and eagerly await funding to deliver this program to willing landowners. Funds from this appropriation will not be used to fund these partner activities.



Federal forestry match of \$30,000 will be used in the creation of the 3 Prairie Section Landowner Handbooks. This funding will be used to aid in the creation and review of the handbooks. Approximately 10,000 handbooks will be printed with this appropriation for distribution to landowners. Additional handbooks will likely be printed with Federal Forestry dollars as well.

**B. Project Impact and Long-term Strategy:** Native Prairie Bank targets MBS identified sites with high biodiversity native prairie for easement enrollment and has set an enrollment goal of 25,000 acres by 2025. As discussed at the June 29, 2016 LCCMR meeting, the SNA program plans to review this long-term goal in the near future.

**C. Funding History:**

Funding Source and Use of Funds	Funding Timeframe	\$ Amount
ENRTF ML13, Ch52, Sec. 2, Subd4c: Native Prairie Stewardship and Prairie Bank Acquisition	July 2013-June 2016	\$750,000
ENRTF ML15, Ch76, Sec2, Subd9d: Native Prairie Stewardship and Prairie Bank Acquisition	July 2015-June 2018	\$3,325,000
OHF ML13, Ch137, Art1, Sec2, Subd4g: Accelerated Prairie – SNA prairie restoration & enhancement (estimated NPB portion only)	July 2013-June 2018	\$ 96,110
OHF ML13, Ch137, Art1, Sec2, Subd4c: SNA & NPB acquisition (estimated NPB portion only)	July 2013-June 2018+	\$ 753,500
OHF ML14, Ch256, Art1, Sec2, Subd4h: Accelerated Prairie – SNA prairie restoration & enhancement (estimated NPB portion only)	July 2014-June 2019	\$ 285,650
OHF ML14, Ch256, Art1, Sec2, Subd2e: NPB acquisition	July 2014-June 2019+	\$ 3,000,000
OHF ML15, First Sp. Session, Ch. 2, Art. 1, Sec. 2, Subd2e: Accelerated Native Prairie Bank Protection	July 2015-June 2018	\$3,740,000
OHF ML15, First Sp. Session, Ch. 2, Art. 1, Sec. 2, Subd2k: Accelerated Prairie Restoration & Enhancement (estimated NPB portion only)	July 2015-June 2020	\$125,000
OHF ML16, Ch. 172, Art. 1, Sec. 2, Subd2f: Accelerated Native Prairie Bank Protection	July 2016-June 2019	\$2,541,000
OHF ML16, Ch. 172, Art. 1, Sec. 2, Subd2j: Accelerated Prairie Restoration & Enhancement (estimated NPB portion only)	July 2016-June 2021	\$215,000

**VIII. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS:**

- The project is for 3 years, will begin on 07/01/2017, and end 06/30/2020.
- Periodic project status update reports will be submitted March 1 and September 1 of each year, with the first status report being submitted by November 1, 2017.
- A final report and associated products will be submitted between June 30 and September 1, 2020.

**IX. VISUAL COMPONENT or MAP(S):** See attached priority area map. A final map will be created once parcels are acquired and specific locations are known.

**X. FEE TITLE ACQUISITION/CONSERVATION EASEMENT/RESTORATION REQUIREMENTS:**

**A. Parcel List:** See attached Parcel List

## **B. Acquisition/Restoration Information:**

### **Conservation Easement 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.**

Eligibility for Native Prairie Bank is established in both M.S. 84.96 and MN Rule 6136.09. To qualify, land must be covered by native prairie vegetation and have never been plowed. Eligible lands are prioritized based on factors including: size, quality and diversity of the native prairie habitat; occurrence of, or suitable habitat for rare species; location relative to other native prairie and/or public land; and potential for long-term habitat management and enhancement. MBS data is the foundation for many of these evaluation factors. Native Prairie Bank uses the "Native Prairie Bank Evaluation Form" to evaluate and score individual projects.

**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.**

- [Minnesota Prairie Conservation Plan](#)
- [Minnesota's Wildlife Action Plan 2015-2025](#)
- [Minnesota DNR Strategic Conservation Agenda](#)
- [Minnesota's Statewide Conservation Plan](#)

**3. For any conservation easement acquired, 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.**

Each parcel acquired as a new NPB will have a Prairie Stewardship Plan. Prairie Stewardship Plans include, 1) a resource inventory and assessment of all the lands be native plant communities or restored to plant communities that would have been native to the site, 2) landowner and DNR's goals, and 3) prairie management alternatives/recommendations. The goals for the NPB's management are 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 a statement on funding. Long-term management costs (e.g. invasive species treatments, prescribed fire, and ecological monitoring/evaluation) will be covered by a combination of funding sources, including, but not limited to, the landowner, ENRTF, Outdoor Heritage Fund (OHF), federal grants, and other funds as appropriated. Each Prairie Stewardship Plan is kept in a DNR internal shared electronic filing system accessible to all SNA staff.

**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.**

DNR policy is to notify the county assessor prior to easement closing, however county board approval is not requested.

**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. A copy of the written approval should be provided to LCCMR.**

As part of the DNR acquisition process, all NPB acquisitions are required to have approval of the Ecological and Water Resources Division Director and land conveyances are accepted by the Director or Deputy Director of the Division of Lands and Minerals who have delegated authority to approve this for the Commissioner.

**6. Provide a statement addressing how conservation easements will address specific water quality protection activities, such as keeping water on the landscape, reducing nutrient and contaminant loading, protecting groundwater, and not permitting artificial hydrological modifications.**

Native Prairie Bank's goal is to protect existing high quality, high functioning native prairie that currently is providing multiple water quality benefits. In addition, the easement terms and the Prairie Stewardship Plan they are required to follow assures that the prairie health is sustained, thus they inherently do an excellent job of keeping the water on the landscape, reducing nutrient and contaminant loading, and protecting groundwater. In addition, use of pesticides on the easement is prohibited without approval of the DNR. The easement terms also prohibit artificial hydrological modifications by prohibiting excavation, cultivations, drainage, filling, and irrigation.

**7. Describe the long-term monitoring and enforcement program for conservation easements acquired on parcels by your organization, including explanations of the process used for calculating conservation easement monitoring and enforcements costs, the process used for annual inspection and reporting on monitoring and enforcement activities, and the process used to ensure perpetual funding and implementation of monitoring and enforcement activities.**

The policy of the DNR is to protect both the conservation values of the property protected by these easements and the investment of the state in those interests. Elements of this stewardship include the creation of baseline property reports, enforcement protocols, regular compliance monitoring, record keeping and reporting, and maintaining effective working relationships with the owners of these easement properties. Native Prairie Bank implements this policy by following DNR Operational Order #128 "Conservation Easement Stewardship" in addition to the "Ecological and Water Resources Division Conservation Easement Stewardship Plan and Guidelines". This operational order and supporting division guidance calls for annual landowner contacts as well as on-the-ground site evaluations once every three years if no violations are found. If a violation is found, monitoring would occur annually until the violation is corrected.

Budgeted into this work plan is funding to be deposited into the DNR's Conservation Easement Stewardship Account dedicated to the perpetual monitoring and enforcement of conservation easements. The dedicated stewardship funds will provide the support needed for long-term, ongoing monitoring and minor enforcement activities of Native Prairie Bank easements acquired under this proposal. For each specific Native Prairie Bank easement, initial investment dollars are determined by using a DNR approved Conservation Easement Stewardship Calculator, which estimates the annual expenses and the investment needed to generate annual income sufficient to cover these expenses in perpetuity.

Funds for this activity will be deposited into the established conservation easement stewardship account and Minnesota Management & Budget protocols will be adhered to. After the closing of each Native Prairie Bank easement acquired with this appropriation, the calculated easement stewardship funds will be deposited into this account. Once funds are deposited and interest begins to accrue, this accrued interest will be applied towards actual expenses tied to annual landowner contact, regular compliance monitoring, record keeping and minor enforcement protocols.

**Restoration**

**1. Provide a statement confirming that all restoration activities completed with these funds will occur on land permanently protected by a conservation easement or public ownership.**

All restoration activities done with this appropriation are on DNR-owned perpetual Native Prairie Bank lands administered by the SNA Program.

- 2. Summarize the components and expected outcomes of restoration and management plans for the parcels to be restored by your organization, how these plans are kept on file by your organization, and overall strategies for long-term plan implementation.**

Each restoration project will be based upon a Native Prairie Stewardship Plan (ecological restoration and management plan) and/or project plan with goals for reconstructing plant communities that are native to the site that are 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. Each restoration and management plan and project plan is kept in a DNR internal shared electronic filing system accessible to all SNA staff.

- 3. Describe how restoration efforts will utilize and follow the Board of Soil and Water Resources “Native Vegetation Establishment and Enhancement Guidelines” in order to ensure ecological integrity and pollinator enhancement.**

The SNA Program follows or exceeds the recommendations found in the BWSR “Native Vegetation Establishment and Enhancement Guidelines”. NPB restorations typically follow the current BWSR Guidelines, including Project Guidance, Plant Community Restoration, and Temporary Cover. The SNA Program follows the general direction of the BWSR Guidelines for “Recommended Steps for Obtaining Plant Materials”, and has additional and more restrictive requirements for restoration material sources. Specifically, restoration and management of DNR lands are governed by DNR Operational Order #124 on “Plant Material Standards for Native Plant Community Restoration” and DNR Operational Order #130 on “Pollinator Habitat” (which include BMPs).

- 4. Describe how the long-term maintenance and management needs of the parcel being restored with these funds will be met and financed into the future.**

Long-term management costs (e.g. invasive species treatments, prescribed fire, and monitoring/evaluation) will be covered by a combination funding sources, including, but not limited to, the landowner, ENRTF, Outdoor Heritage Fund (OHF), federal grants, and other funds as appropriated.

- 5. Describe how consideration will be given to contracting with Conservation Corps of Minnesota for any restoration activities.**

DNR has a standing general contract with CCM under which the SNA Program often does project or activity specific agreements. For restoration projects, CCM has been and will continue to be used when appropriate for hand seed harvest. CCM also does some invasive species control on NPBs and will be considered on restoration projects for post-planting weed control.

- 6. Provide a statement indicating that evaluations will be completed on parcels where activities were implemented both 1) initially after activity completion and 2) three years later as a follow-up. Evaluations should analyze improvements to the parcel and whether goals have been met, identify any problems with the implementation, and identify any findings that can be used to improve implementation of future restoration efforts at the site or elsewhere.**

Restoration projects will be evaluated and a report submitted to the LCCMR to ascertain how well the native plants have been established and non-natives controlled. The evaluation reports include a summary of management plan outcomes, activities completed through the project, map of the project area, a statement of ongoing management needs and funding, and a summary of the evaluation.

**Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund**

**M.L. 2017 Project Budget**

**Project Title:** Native Prairie Stewardship & Prairie Bank Easement Acquisition

**Legal Citation:** M.L. 2017, Chp. xx, Sec. xx, Subd. Xx

**Project Manager:** Judy Schulte

**Organization:** MN DNR – SNA Program

**M.L. 2017 ENRTF Appropriation:** \$ 3,500,000

**Project Length and Completion Date:** 3 Years, June 30, 2020

**Date of Report:** October 19, 2016



ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES TRUST FUND BUDGET	Activity 1 Budget	Amount Spent	Activity 1 Balance	Activity 2 Budget	Amount Spent	Activity 2 Balance	Activity 3 Budget	Amount Spent	Activity 3 Balance	Activity 4 Budget	Amount Spent	Activity 4 Balance	TOTAL BUDGET	TOTAL BALANCE
<b>BUDGET ITEM</b>	<i>Native Prairie Bank Acquisition</i>			<i>Long-Term Easement Stewardship</i>			<i>Prairie Restoration &amp; Enhancement</i>			<i>Native Prairie Landowner Assistance</i>				
<b>Personnel (Wages and Benefits)</b>														
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.	\$281,600		\$281,600				\$358,168		\$358,168	\$278,500		\$278,500	\$918,268	\$918,268
Acquisition and Management Coordinators & Prairie Biologist (0.6 FTE for 2-yrs)														
Specialist and Technician (5.0 FTE spread across 6 people for 2-yrs)														
Laborer and seasonal crews (1.5 FTE spread across 3-5 people for 2-yrs)														
<b>Professional/Technical/Service Contracts</b>	\$0		\$0				\$288,000		\$288,000	\$246,000		\$246,000	\$534,000	\$534,000
Professional/Technical Contracts														
Activity 3-Outcome 5 (~\$35,000) Adaptive Management Monitoring (~14 NPBs).														
Activity 4-Outcome 3 (~\$15,000) Prairie Subsection Landowner Handbooks (8 handbooks/10,000 copies) contractors to be selected for writing services following state procurement & bidding processes														
Activity 4-Outcome 4 (~\$38,000) Landowner Network & Outcome 6 (~\$38,000) Prairie Tax Exemption Online System (30 new Enrollees) CCM Individual Placement														
Activity 4-Outcome 5 (~\$155,000) Prairie Stewardship Plans (~20 plans) Contractors to be selected following state procurement & bidding processes														
Service Contracts														
Activity 3-Outcome 1 (~\$6,000) Prairie reconstruction/restoration (~10 ac.) Priority given to CCM; contractors to be selected following state procurement & bidding processes														
Activity 3-Outcome 2 (~\$222,000) Woody removal & exotic species treatment (~ 200 ac.) Priority given to CCM; contractors to be selected following state procurement & bidding processes														
Activity 3-Outcome 3: (~\$25,000) Prescribed Burns (~360 ac) Priority given to CCM; contractors to be selected following state procurement & bidding processes														

<b>Equipment/Tools/Supplies</b>														
Supplies, parts, tools, repair costs & supplies for restoration and enhancement, including safety items, hand tools, etc; signs & posts; workshop & event supplies	\$2,724		\$2,724				\$31,450		\$31,450	\$15,200		\$15,200	\$49,375	\$49,375
<b>Easement Acquisition</b>														
Estimate securing about 6 easements for 335 acres that will be held by the MN DNR - SNA Program	\$1,340,000		\$1,340,000										\$1,340,000	\$1,340,000
<b>Easement Stewardship</b>														
Long-Term Easement Stewardship Funding				\$132,000		\$132,000							\$132,000	\$132,000
<b>Professional Services for Acquisition</b>														
Attorney General's Office and DNR Lands and Minerals costs associated with completing an acquisition; anticipate about 6 transactions; cost/transaction vary between projects.	\$180,000		\$180,000										\$180,000	\$180,000
<b>Printing</b>														
Printing of baseline property reports, Landowner Network mailings, and materials for workshops and field days (~\$4,600). Printing of ~10,000 Landowner Handbooks (~\$16,000)	\$1,500		\$1,500							\$19,100		\$19,100	\$20,600	\$20,600
<b>Travel expenses in Minnesota</b>														
Fleet charges for trucks, cars, & equipment, e.g. mowers, seeders; mileage, lodging & meals as per state contracts	\$26,400		\$26,400				\$100,000		\$100,000	\$53,000		\$53,000	\$179,400	\$179,400
<b>Other</b>														
<b>CCM Individual Placement Office Costs</b> (computer/software, phone, desk chair)										\$2,000		\$2,000	\$2,000	\$2,000
<b>Landowner Handbook-</b> DNR Creative Services Graphic Design for creation Landowner Handbooks (Activity 4 Outcome 3)										\$15,000		\$15,000	\$15,000	\$15,000
<b>Prairie Tax Exemption Online System-</b> MNIT Services assistance in the creation of an online application system (Activity 4 Outcome 6)										\$30,000		\$30,000	\$30,000	\$30,000
<b>Direct &amp; Necessary Costs</b> DNR's direct and necessary costs pay for activities that are directly related to and necessary for accomplishing appropriated programs/projects. This includes HR Support (~\$20,888), Safety Support (~\$5,850), Financial Support (~\$21,933), Communication Support (~\$5,264), Support (~\$40,986), Planning Support (~\$3,648), and Procurement Support (~\$788)	\$19,936		\$19,936				\$44,280		\$44,280	\$35,142		\$35,142	\$99,358	\$99,358
<b>COLUMN TOTAL</b>	<b>\$1,852,160</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$1,852,160</b>	<b>\$132,000</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$132,000</b>	<b>\$821,890</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$821,890</b>	<b>\$693,942</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$693,942</b>	<b>\$3,500,000</b>	<b>\$3,500,000</b>

**Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund**

**M.L. 17 Parcel List**

**Project Title:** Native Prairie Stewardship & Prairie Bank Easement Acquisition

**Legal Citation:** M.L. 2017, Chp. xx, Sec. xx, Subd. Xx

**Project Manager Name:** Judy Schulte

**Organization:** MN DNR-SNA

**M.L. 17 ENRTF Appropriation:** \$3,500,000

**Project Length and Completion Date:** 3 Years, June 30, 2020

**Date of Report:** October 19, 2016

#	Acquisition or Restoration Parcel Name	Geographic Coordinates Format: [Deg.]° [Min.]' [Sec.]" [Hemis.]		Estimated Cost	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	Chanarambie Creek Prairies	43° 55' 12.9"	96° 1' 8.0"	\$4500/ac	Murray, Pipestone	Dry gravel, mesic & wet prairies in biggest grassland complex with the highest quality prairie parcels in SW MN	Conservation easement acquisition	80		Private	DNR-SNA	
2	Lac Qui Parle Prairies	43° 12' 10.4"	96° 10' 32.1"	\$3500/ac	Big Stone, Lac qui Parle	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, as well as prairie chickens	Conservation easement acquisition	200		Private	DNR-SNA	
3	Antelope Hills Prairie	44° 56' 0.5"	96° 20' 29.8"	\$3500/ac	Lac qui Parle	Mixture of dry hill, sand-gravel, mesic and wet prairies. Expands habitat for many rare plant and bird species	Conservation easement acquisition	160		Private	DNR-SNA	
4	Glacial Lakes & Moraine Prairie	45° 25' 20.0"	95° 14' 34.5"	\$3000/ac	Pope, Kandiyohi, Swift, Stearns	Dry sand-gravel prairies of the Alexandria Moraine, provides habitat for the threatened Dakota skipper as well as the Poweshiek skipper and regal fritillary	Conservation easement acquisition	150		Private	DNR-SNA	

5	Prairie Coteau/Rock River Prairies	44° 4' 59.4"	96° 10' 23.8"	\$4500/ac	Pipestone	Dry hill prairie, prairie meadow, wet prairie, rare species; part of a large, contiguous prairie macrosite, expands habitat around the Prairie Coteau SNA	Conservation easement acquisition	150		Private	DNR-SNA	
6	Hole-in-the-Mountain Prairies	44° 11' 36.9"	96° 19' 1.8"	\$3800/ac	Pipestone, Lincoln	Dry hill prairie, prairie meadow, wet prairie, rare species; part of a large, contiguous prairie macrosite, expands habitat around existing TNC and DNR lands	Conservation easement acquisition	150		Private	DNR-SNA	
7	Shakotan Prairies	44° 23' 1.9"	96° 25' 25.4"	\$3500/ac	Lincoln	Dry hill prairie, prairie meadow, wet prairie, rare species; part of a large, contiguous prairie macrosite	Conservation easement acquisition	150		Private	DNR-SNA	
8	Upper MN River Prairies	44° 40' 21.2"	95° 19' 2.0"	\$5500/ac	Chippewa, Yellow Medicine, Renville, Redwood	MN River Valley native prairie including oak savanna, wet prairie, rock outcrops; expands habitat for many rare plants, butterflies and birds	Conservation easement acquisition	200		Private	DNR-SNA	
9	Yellow Medicine Coteau Prairie	44° 43' 42.7"	96° 25' 47.0"	\$4400/ac	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	Conservation easement acquisition	160		Private	DNR-SNA	
10	Des Moines River Valley	43° 50' 31.2"	95° 7' 7.6"	\$5500/ac	Cottonwood, Jackson	Des Moines River Valley native prairie including oak savanna, dry hill prairie; expands habitat for many, butterflies, birds and rare plants - including prairie bush clover.	Conservation easement acquisition	100		Private	DNR-SNA	
11	Blue Mounds/Touch-The-Sky Prairies	43° 43' 16.2"	96° 12' 43.3"	\$5900/Ac	Rock	Mesic to wet prairie with rock outcrops; provides habitat for many rare rock outcrop plants	Conservation easement acquisition	80		Private	DNR-SNA	



12	Big Stone Moraines	45° 19' 7.5"	96° 20' 2.4"	\$3000/ac	Big Stone	Prairie meadow, wet prairie, rare species; part of a large, contiguous prairie macrosite, expands habitat for many rare species as well as prairie chickens	Conservation easement acquisition	200		Private	DNR-SNA	
13	Big Stone Lake Prairie (north & south)	45° 25' 33.7"	96° 40' 41.0"	\$3000/Ac	Big Stone	Dry Hill, mesic and wet prairies along Big Stone Lake next to DNR state park and SNA parcels	Conservation easement acquisition	80		Private	DNR-SNA	
14	Rothsay Prairies	46° 29' 27.0"	96° 21' 23.4"	\$2850/ac	Wilkin	Prairie meadow, wet prairie, rare species; part of a large, contiguous prairie macrosite, expands habitat for many rare species as well as prairie chickens	Conservation easement acquisition	160		Private	DNR-SNA	
15	Glacial Ridge Prairies	47° 41' 46.9"	96° 18' 43.9"	\$2250/ac	Polk	Prairie meadow, wet prairie, rare species; part of a large, contiguous prairie macrosite, expands habitat for many rare species as well as prairie chickens	Conservation easement acquisition	160		Private	DNR-SNA	
16	Felton Prairies	47° 3' 48.0"	96° 24' 53.7"	\$2500/ac	Clay	Prairie meadow, wet prairie, rare species; part of a large, contiguous prairie macrosite, expands habitat for many rare species as well as Prairie Chickens	Conservation easement acquisition	100		Private	DNR-SNA	
17	Lake Christina Hills Prairies	46° 6' 33.3"	95° 41' 33.8"	\$1950/ac	Ottertail, Douglas, Grant	Dry hill to wet prairies; part of the rolling topography of the Alexandria moraine	Conservation easement acquisition	80		Private	DNR-SNA	
18	Sherburne Sands Prairies	45° 23' 40.7"	93° 39' 49.8"	\$2800/ac	Sherburne	A mosaic of prairie, wetlands and oak savanna set in an important transition zone	Conservation easement acquisition	80		Private	DNR-SNA	
19	Frontenac Hay Creek Bluffs	44° 30' 20.5"	92° 25' 6.1"	\$4000/ac	Goodhue	Southern dry bedrock bluff (goat) prairies in a complex of bluff prairies and cold streams	Conservation easement acquisition	40		Private	DNR-SNA	
20	Kellogg-Weaver Dunes Prairies	44° 16' 10.6"	91° 56' 2.8"	\$3400/ac	Wabasha, Winona	Rolling sand dune topography, mature dunes with dry, mesic, or wet prairie as well as oak savanna	Conservation easement acquisition	40		Private	DNR-SNA	

21	Root River Valley Prairies	43° 46' 14.6"	91° 39' 51.8"	\$3800/ac	Houston, Filmore, Winona	Southern dry bedrock bluff (goat) prairies in a complex of bluff prairies and cold streams; habitat for timber rattlesnakes	Conservation easement acquisition	40		Private	DNR-SNA	
22	Lake Bronson and Aspen Parkland Prairies	48° 50' 39.1"	96° 30' 53.5"	\$2500/ac	Kittson, Roseau, Marshall	Aspen parkland complex-many prairie dominated aspen complexes are succeeding to woodland in absence of fire	Conservation easement acquisition	200		Private	DNR-SNA	
23	Agassiz Dunes	47° 29' 8.3"	96° 20' 14.3"	\$1,800/ac	Polk, Norman	Dry barrens oak savanna-rare prairie plant community in northern MN	Conservation easement acquisition	150		Private	DNR-SNA	
24	Wambach Santee Prairie	47° 24' 55.7"	95° 56' 36.3"	\$1,800/ac	Mahnomen	Prairie meadow complexes, prairie rich fens and other rare northern plant communities	Conservation easement acquisition	150		Private	DNR-SNA	
25	Blanket Flower Prairies	46° 42' 5.4"	96° 11' 37.1"	\$3000/ac	Clay, Becker, Otter Tail	Dry sand-gravel prairie in Alexandria Moraine and Hardwood Hills subsection	Conservation easement acquisition	200		Private	DNR-SNA	
26	Blue Stem Prairie	46° 49' 50.0"	96° 26' 56.0"	\$1800/ac	Clay	Mesic, wet meadow/carr, & wet prairie parcels intermixed with DNR SNA and Audobon preserves	Conservation easement acquisition	80		Private	DNR-SNA	
27	Lake Traverse Prairies	45° 42' 2.0"	96° 40' 48.2"	\$3000/ac	Traverse	Dry prairie and prairie-woodland complex	Conservation easement acquisition	150		Private	DNR-SNA	
<p><b>NOTES:</b> NPB acquisition will be targeted at high quality native prairie parcels in the areas listed above. These are named Prairie Core Areas identified in the 2010 MN Prairie Conservation Plan, plus priority areas in SE MN. Restoration will occur on NPB sites acquired with these funds or previously acquired NPB sites. When identified, specific restoration parcels will be added to the work plan parcel list.</p>												

# 2017 Environmental and Natural Resources Trust Fund Native Prairie Stewardship & Prairie Bank Easement Acquisition Proposed Acquisition & Restoration Sites



