

2019 Project Abstract

For the Period Ending December 31, 2020

PROJECT TITLE: Improving Statwide GIS Data by Restoring the PLSS

PROJECT MANAGER: Patrick Veraguth

AFFILIATION: Minnesota Association of County Surveyors

MAILING ADDRESS: 526 Willow Drive, PO Box 398

CITY/STATE/ZIP: Alexandria, MN 56308

PHONE: (320) 762-2964

E-MAIL: patv@co.douglas.mn.us

WEBSITE: <http://macsinfo.org/>

FUNDING SOURCE: Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund

LEGAL CITATION: M.L. 2019, First Special Session, Chap. 4, Art. 2, Sec. 2, Subd. 03m

APPROPRIATION AMOUNT: \$135,000

AMOUNT SPENT: \$135,000

AMOUNT REMAINING: \$0

Sound bite of Project Outcomes and Results

The Grant County Pilot Project was created to aid in the recovery and remonumentation of Minnesota's Public Land Survey System (PLSS) Section Corners. Minnesota has over 300,000 Section Corners and less than half of them have been remonumented. All Land Descriptions in Minnesota have been described from these corners; this makes them an invaluable resource that needs to be re-established and maintained for both current and future validations.

Overall Project Outcome and Results

PLSS Section corners were established by the federal government in the late 1800's in Minnesota. Minnesota Association of County Surveyors (MACS) did a rough count of all the Section Corners in the State of Minnesota and came up with over 300,000 corners. Less than half of those corners have been certified and recorded. MACS main goal is to remonument all Section Corners in Minnesota. This is a huge project and will take both time and money to complete.

MACS created this Pilot Project as an example for other counties to reference and then implement a similar plan for PLSS Remonumentation in their location. Grant County was chosen because it did not have a full time County Surveyor on staff and remonumentation has not been a focus for the county until recently. The Remonumentation Committee created a model Request For Proposal (RFP) for other counties to use to aid in hiring a Land Surveyor to remonument Section Corners. The RFP was sent out to all local Land Survey Firms for bids. An informational meeting was held to answer any questions about the RFP. Eight firms attended the meeting; five firms submitted RFPs. Kramer Leas Deleo PC (KLD) was hired to do this work out of the five interviewed firms. KLD measured into all Section, Quarter, and Meander Corner locations in Lawrence Township (Township 130 North, Range 44 West). All corners were excavated that were not in a cut section to expose all monuments set over time at each corner. KLD set monuments and a survey sign at each corner to aid in locating corner monument. KLD recorded Certificates of Location on all corners in Lawrence Township. KLD created Certificate of Survey showing all corners in Lawrence Township. 138 corners were re-established, and Grant County now has an entire Township remonumented. MACS discovered improvements that can be made in their model RFP. MACS looks to implement this model statewide to aid in a statewide remonumentation effort.

Project Results Use and Dissemination

This Pilot Project has made Surveying in Lawrence Township straight-forward, determinable, and cost-effective now that all the corners are set. 138 corners have been re-established. This model RFP can be used by other counties. This Pilot Project is a model for other counties to incorporate in their Section Corner Remonumentation in Minnesota. An ArcView Story Map is in the works and will eventually be used to educate

other counties as well as the general public on Land Surveying and Section Corner Remonumentation. (not part of original project)



Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund (ENRTF)

M.L. 2019 ENRTF Work Plan Final Report (Main Document)

Today's Date: January 22, 2021

Final Report

Date of Work Plan Approval: July 31, 2019

Project Completion Date: December 31, 2020

PROJECT TITLE: Improving Statwide GIS Data by Restoring the PLSS

Project Manager: Patrick Veraguth

Organization: Minnesota Association of County Surveyors

College/Department/Division: PLSS Committee

Mailing Address: 526 Willow Drive, PO Box 398

City/State/Zip Code: Alexandria, MN 56308

Telephone Number: (320) 762-2964

Email Address: patv@co.douglas.mn.us

Web Address: <http://macsinfo.org/>

Location: Township 130 North Range 44 West, Lawrence Township, Grant County Minnesota

Total Project Budget: \$135,000

Amount Spent: \$135,000

Balance: \$0.00

Legal Citation: M.L. 2019, First Special Session, Chp. 4, Art. 2, Sec. 2, Subd. 03m

Appropriation Language: \$135,000 the first year is from the trust fund to the commissioner of natural resources for an agreement with the Minnesota Association of County Surveyors to conduct a pilot project with Grant County to remonument and certify the public land survey corners in Lawrence Township. This appropriation is available until June 30, 2021, by which time the project must be completed and final products delivered.

I. PROJECT STATEMENT:

The Minnesota Association of County Surveyors (MACS) has compiled the number of Public Land Survey (PLS) corners and the number of certified PLS corners in each county. Minnesota has over 300,000 corners in the state and less than half of them have been remonumented and certified. Many of those certified corners do not have GPS coordinates. MACS goal is to reset all these corners and certify them with GPS coordinates for a statewide PLS layer.

This proposal is for a Pilot Project. Grant County and the MACS PLS Committee are working on a pilot project in Grant County to remonument an entire township. There are 137 PLS Corners in Lawrence Township (T130N R44W) which is in the NW corner of Grant County.

The Public Land Survey (PLS) was performed in Minnesota from 1847 to 1905. Most of these PLS corners were originally wooden posts. The Government Land Office (GLO) originally set these corners and gave the power of maintaining them to the State. The State gave that responsibility to the Counties. Traditional funding sources linked to fees leave greater Minnesota short of necessary funds. It is the job of the licensed Land Surveyor to put these corners back to where they were originally set.

These corners affect every landowner in the state. PLS monuments are necessary to accurately depict land ownership and interest in real property, which has impacts on **land transfers, parcel subdivisions, property taxation, hunting and mineral rights and granting of easements**. The environmental or land tie to this proposal is clear in that all resources, their use and delineation, require some description related to the corners of the PLSS. With the loss of one ¼ section corner every parcel of land within two sections are affected, the loss of one section corner has the same adverse effect in four sections. This project will help protect all land rights now and into the future.

II. OVERALL PROJECT STATUS UPDATES:

Update 8/9/19

An RFP has been advertised and completed.

5 Proposals were submitted.

All 5 companies were interviewed.

Kramer Leas Deleo PC (KLD) was chosen to do the work for this project.

A signed contract has been made between KLD and Grant County.

Amendment request 8/9/19

We wish to add Grant County as a fiscal agent for MACS on this project. The fiscal oversight roles will be as follows:

Patrick D. Veraguth is the Douglas and newly appointed Grant County Surveyor.

Patrick is a member of the Minnesota Association on County Surveyor (MACS).

Patrick is the chair of the MACS Public Land Survey System (PLSS) Committee.

The MACS PLSS Committee is trying to remonument the entire state.

Grant County was chosen to do a Township PLSS pilot project.

Patrick will be assisting in digging Section Corners and checking Section Corner Certificates before they are recorded.

Tracey Vonbargen is the Grant County Engineer.

Tracey will be the Fiscal Agent for this project. Address:

224 3rd Street SE

PO Box 1005

Elbow Lake, MN 56531

(218) 685-8300

Bills will be submitted to Grant County for payment.

Pat will verify and Tracey will confirm that the work has been completed satisfactorily.

Grant County will pay the bills initially and then submit for reimbursement from the DNR. Pat will submit the required work plan and budget progress reports to LCCMR. Amendment Approved by LCCMR **8/12/2019**.

First Update December 31, 2019

KLD created Statement of Evidence word files for each Section corner in Lawrence Township. KLD visited 123 Section Corners in Lawrence Township and update Statement of Evidence for each corner searched for. KLD found 96 monuments at these locations. KLD survey crew member, Grant County Backhoe operator and Pat Veraguth dug 30 corner locations along County Road 40. KLD updates Statement of Evidence for each corner dug. Corner excavation will continue after frost has disappeared from the roadbeds.

Second Update July 1, 2020

Grant County Surveyor has continued to excavate for section corners and finished the last excavation July 28th. Data was exchanged between the Grant County Surveyor and KLD so they can begin setting final corner monuments and tying them off. KLD purchased signpost and signs for each corner. The Grant County purchased 100 cast iron monuments to be set soon.

Final Report between project end (October 31) and December 31, 2020.

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III. PROJECT ACTIVITIES AND OUTCOMES:

ACTIVITY 1 Title: Remonumenting Lawrence Township in Grant County

Description: *-Initial Research will review the GLO notes, GLO plats, Historical County Surveyor Books, filed surveys and other survey sources. This information will be compiled into a Statement of Evidence for each corner in the township.*

-Initial survey shall search for all monuments in the township, perform excavations at any corners that are buried in roads and collect survey grade geodetic coordinates for each corner. Grant County has volunteered their backhoe services for this project.

-Final Survey shall analyze data with the County Surveyor and all final corner positions will be approved by the County Surveyor. Upon approval, all corners will be set with durable magnetic monuments.

-Certify all corners with a standard corner certificate and final Statement of Evidence and record documents in the County Recorder's office.

ACTIVITY 1 ENRTF BUDGET: \$135,000

Outcome	Completion Date
1. Section Corner Research	August 31, 2019
2. Initial Survey	December 31, 2019
3. Section Corner Excavations	August 31, 2020
4. Finalize Section Corner Locations	September 30, 2020
5. File Corner Certificates	October 31, 2020

First Update December 31, 2019

Section Corner research has been completed along with the initial Survey. Corner excavations were started but not completed. Work will begin this spring after frost has disappeared. We may be a little ahead of the schedule.

Second Update July 1, 2020

Section corner excavations are complete. Monuments, signs, and signpost have been purchased and are ready to be set in August 2020. Corner certificates will be created and recorded as they are set. Project is moving along nicely!

Final Report between project end (October 31) and December 31, 2020.

KLD and the Douglas County Surveyor met to discuss all corner locations. All locations were approved. Section Corners Monuments, signs and signposts have all been set. Section Corner Certificates have been created approved and recorded. A Certificate of Survey was created for all corners in Lawrence Township. Survey shows all corner Coordinates, Monument Type and Recorded Document Number for each corner. Final bills have been submitted and will be filed with the DNR Pass-through Office soon. This Model will be an excellent resource for other counties to use for their Remonumentation programs.

IV. DISSEMINATION:

Description: Remonumentation of the Section Corners in Lawrence township will include the setting of new monuments when needed along with a sign with ENRTF acknowledgement and post at each corner. Corner certificates will be recorded in the County Recorder’s office for each corner. Corner coordinates will be added to the Mngeo Statewide Database for Section Corners.

The Minnesota Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund (ENRTF) will be acknowledged through use of the trust fund logo or attribution language on project print and electronic media, publications, signage, and other communications per the [ENRTF Acknowledgement Guidelines](#).

First Update December 31, 2019

Work will begin on setting final Section corner monuments and signs this spring. Excavations will continue this summer until all corners have been excavated. Corner Certificates will be drafted and finalized as monuments are set and certified. As corner certificates are drawn and sign, they will be recorded.

Second Update July 1, 2020

Section corner excavations are complete. Monuments, signs, and signpost have been purchased and are ready to be set in August 2020. Corner certificates will be created and recorded as they are set. Project is moving along nicely!

Final Report between project end (October 31) and December 31, 2020.

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V. ADDITIONAL BUDGET INFORMATION:

A. Personnel and Capital Expenditures

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

Explanation of Use of Classified Staff: N/A

Total Number of Full-time Equivalent (FTE) Directly Funded with this ENRTF Appropriation:

35 hours County Surveyor work	= 0.017 TOTAL FTE:
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Total Number of Full-time Equivalent (FTE) Estimated to Be Funded through Contracts with this ENRTF Appropriation:

1260 hours for RFP survey work	= 0.61 TOTAL FTE:
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VI. PROJECT PARTNERS:

A. Partners outside of project manager’s organization receiving ENRTF funding

Name	Title	Affiliation	Role
Patrick Veraguth	Douglas County Surveyor	Create RFP contract	Excavated Section Corners and Approved corner Locations and certificates
RFP winner KLD Inc.	MN Licensed Land Surveyor	Section work	Surveyor completed remonumentation work

B. Partners outside of project manager’s organization NOT receiving ENRTF funding

Name	Title	Affiliation	Role
Tracey Vonbargen	Grant County Engineer	County contact	Incharge of scheduling for corner excavations and <u>Fiscal Agent for the Project</u>
Diann Giese	Grant County Recorder	County Recorder	Provided copies and recorded corner certificates.

VII. LONG-TERM- IMPLEMENTATION AND FUNDING:

This is a pilot project for remonumenting the PLSS across the entire state. MACS is looking for funding partners to implement a statewide remonumentation program. This project is the first step in this process. This will be a model for other counties to follow in the future.

VIII. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS:

- Project status update reports will be submitted December 31 and July 1 each year of the project
- A final report and associated products will be submitted by December 31, 2020

IX. SEE ADDITIONAL WORK PLAN COMPONENTS:

- A. Budget Spreadsheet**
- B. Visual Component or Map**
- C. Parcel List Spreadsheet**
- D. Acquisition, Easements, and Restoration Requirements**
- E. Research Addendum**

Final Attachment A:

Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund

M.L. 2019 Final Budget Spreadsheet

Legal Citation: M.L. 2019, First Special Session, Chp. 4, Art. 2, Sec. 2, Subd. 03m

Project Manager: Patrick Veraguth

Fiscal Agent: Tracey Vonbargen, Grant County Engineer

Project Title: Improving Statewide GIS Data by Restoring The PLS

Organization: Minnesota Association of County Surveyors

Project Budget: \$135,000

Project Length and Completion Date: 1.5 Years, December 31, 2020

Today's Date: December 22, 2020



ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES TRUST FUND BUDGET	Budget	Amount Spent	Balance
BUDGET ITEM			
Personnel (Wages and Benefits)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Douglas County Surveyor approves each corner certificate (15 minutes per cert) 137 certs. The Douglas County Surveyor is contracted by Grant County to check these corner certificates.	\$ 2,400	\$ 2,400	\$ -
Professional/Technical/Service Contracts			
RFP for Land Survey work (Estimate \$1000/corner)	\$ 126,000	\$ 126,000	\$ -
Equipment/Tools/Supplies			
PLS corner monuments (\$50/monument)	\$ 6,600	\$ 6,600	\$ -
	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
COLUMN TOTAL	\$ 135,000	\$ 135,000	\$ -

OTHER FUNDS CONTRIBUTED TO THE PROJECT	Status (secured or pending)	Budget	Spent	Balance
Non-State:		\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
State:		\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
In kind:		\$ -	\$ -	\$ -

PAST AND CURRENT ENRTF APPROPRIATIONS	Amount legally obligated but not yet spent	Budget	Spent	Balance
Current appropriation:		\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Past appropriations:		\$ -	\$ -	\$ -

