



# Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund (ENRTF)

## M.L. 2019 ENRTF Work Plan (Main Document)

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**Today's Date:** August 23, 2018

**Date of Next Status Update Report:** April 1, 2020

**Date of Work Plan Approval:** June 5, 2019

**Project Completion Date:** June 30, 2022

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

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**PROJECT TITLE:** DNR Scientific and Natural areas

**Project Manager:** Judy Schulte

**Organization:** MN DNR- Scientific and Natural Areas Program

**College/Department/Division:** Division of Ecological & Water Resources

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**Location:** Statewide

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**Total Project Budget:** \$3,500,000

**Amount Spent:** \$0

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

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**Legal Citation:** M.L. 2019, First Special Session, Chp. 4, Art. 2, Sec. 2, Subd. 09a

**Appropriation Language:** \$3,500,000 the first year is from the trust fund to the commissioner of natural resources for the scientific and natural areas (SNA) program to restore and enhance wildlife habitat on SNAs, increase public involvement and outreach, and strategically acquire high-quality lands that meet criteria for SNAs under Minnesota Statutes, section 86A.05, from willing sellers. A list of proposed acquisitions and restorations is required in the work plan.

## **I. PROJECT STATEMENT:**

The unique and vital role of state Scientific and Natural Areas (SNAs) will be increased through wildlife habitat restoration and enhancement (prescribed burn, invasive control, etc.), increased public involvement, and strategic acquisition. About 500 acres of native habitat restoration, enhancement, and site improvement activities will be targeted at SNAs threatened by human impacts, invasive species, and lack of natural disturbance regimes and to provide nature-based recreation. In cooperation with Conservation Corp of Minnesota (CCM), outreach and citizen science actions will result in public participation at 70 SNA events and a network of volunteer site stewards at 130 SNAs. About 300 acres will be acquired from willing sellers and designated as SNAs in order to strategically protect at risk native plant communities and wildlife habitat of state significance identified by the Minnesota Biological Survey (MBS) and the updated SNA Strategic Land Protection Plan.

## **II. OVERALL PROJECT STATUS UPDATES:**

**First Update April 1, 2020**

**Second Update November 1, 2020**

**Third Update April 1, 2021**

**Fourth Update November 1, 2021**

**Fifth Update April 1, 2022**

**Final Report between project end (June 30) and August 15, 2022**

## **III. PROJECT ACTIVITIES AND OUTCOMES:**

### **ACTIVITY 1 Title: Native Habitat Restoration, Enhancements and Improvements on 500 acres**

**Description:** Native habitat restoration and site improvement activities will be completed on about 500 acres at about 25 SNAs as guided by ecological data and monitoring. Management plans will be completed for about 7 SNAs (including sites acquired through these funds). About 35 SNAs will be monitored to improve management of habitat for rare be compliance monitored. Work will begin to create a strategic long-term ecological monitoring plan. Interpretive signs-kiosks will be developed and installed at about 5 SNAs. SNA staff will provide ecological/technical guidance and on-site verification for 5 projects implemented by partners on SNAs. Restoration and improvement activities will be carried out by DNR staff, CCM, Sentence to Service, volunteers, and/or contractors. Activities include seed collection, site preparation, planting and aftercare, invasive species control and removal, site clean-up, signing, interpretive kiosks, fencing, prescribed burns (or alternative prescribed disturbance, such prescribed haying, mowing or grazing, necessary where use of fire is limited), management plan preparation, monitoring, and coordination-oversight of projects implemented by partners. This activity includes work to bring acquired parcels up to DNR's minimum standards and includes restoration and improvements of acquired sites if ecologically advisable and feasible within the appropriation period.

### **ACTIVITY 1 ENRTF BUDGET: \$1,083,418**

<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Completion Date</b>
1. ~10 acres of restoration of forest, prairie, & outcrop sites	06/30/2022
2. ~260 acres of woody removal & invasive species treatment	06/30/2022
3. ~230 acres of prescribed burns	06/30/2022
4. ~5 SNA interpretive kiosks installed AND development work on ~10 sites	06/30/2022

5. ecological/technical guidance for ~5 partnership projects	06/30/2022
6. management plans completed for ~7 SNAs	06/30/2022
7. adaptive management, ecological & conservation easement monitoring on ~35 SNAs	06/30/2022

**First Update April 1, 2020**

**Second Update November 1, 2020**

**Third Update April 1, 2021**

**Fourth Update November 1, 2021**

**Fifth Update April 1, 2022**

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**ACTIVITY 2 Title: Public Engagement, Outreach & Citizen Science in Natural Areas**

**Description:** More Minnesotans will be involved in volunteer habitat conservation and education activities on SNAs and in the conservation of other key natural areas. A team consisting of CCM individual placements, SNA field naturalists, an outreach coordinator and a part-time site steward coordinator made possible through this funding will: sustain a network of 130 SNA volunteer site stewards who help care for SNAs and organize about 70 events focusing volunteer work days, recreation-educational events (guided nature hikes, etc.), and citizen science monitoring and bio-blitzes. New and refined electronic/social media communications tools, maps and interpretive information will be developed and disseminated to advance the public's understanding of Minnesota's wild places and biodiversity and to enhance nature-based recreational use of SNAs. Natural Area Registry agreements may be established on sites of high biodiversity significance to promote conservation of natural areas owned by others.

**ACTIVITY 2 ENRTF BUDGET: \$475,851**

<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Completion Date</b>
1. SNA website, e-book, social media, maps & other interpretive info	06/30/2022
2. ~ 70 citizen science & volunteer events (management work days & ed. events)	06/30/2022
3. network of volunteer site stewards at ~130 SNAs	06/30/2022

**First Update April 1, 2020**

**Second Update November 1, 2020**

**Third Update April 1, 2021**

**Fourth Update November 1, 2021**

**Fifth Update April 1, 2022**

**Final Report between project end (June 30) and August 15, 2022**

**ACTIVITY 3 Title: Strategic Acquisition of Sites with Biodiversity Significance – 300 acres**

**Description:** Acquisition and designation of about 300 acres as state SNAs will protect and buffer the most important MBS-recommended sites of biodiversity significance with landowners willing to sell. Proactive landowner contacts will be targeted in 8 high priority opportunity areas identified in the SNA Strategic Plan,

including prairie core areas in the Minnesota Prairie Conservation Plan. In order to be acquired and designated as SNA, the site must be recommended for SNA designation in an Ecological Evaluation report which serves as the site's baseline assessment for fee acquisitions. Candidate sites are numerically evaluated with priority to MBS-mapped biodiversity significance sites that are predominantly MBS-mapped native plant communities with habitat for rare species and Species in Greatest Conservation Need. The attached map and acquisition list identifies priority projects for this appropriation. The DNR may request to add other qualifying sites to the list. Most acquisition will be of fee title, but if more appropriate, acquisition could be a SNA-administered conservation easement with SNA designation. New to the parcel list, is the addition of specific sites currently protected via permanent conservation easements that fall into SNA's Strategic Protection Plan. The rare features and unique plant communities on these sites would greatly benefit from the protection and management opportunities provided by SNA and would add great value to SNA goals and mission. If acquired, an appraisal would be utilized to find the fair market value of the land including current encumbrances such as conservation easements. New MBS and other scientific data will be incorporated into the SNA Strategic Plan GIS maps to continue refinement and increase strategic prioritization of SNA acquisitions.

### **ACTIVITY 3 ENRTF BUDGET: \$1,940,731**

<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Completion Date</b>
1. acquisition as SNA of ~300 acres of high quality habitat	06/30/2022

**First Update April 1, 2020**

**Second Update November 1, 2020**

**Third Update April 1, 2021**

**Fourth Update November 1, 2021**

**Fifth Update April 1, 2022**

**Final Report between project end (June 30) and August 15, 2022**

### **IV. DISSEMINATION:**

**Description:** Dissemination will primarily be achieved through the SNA webpage on the DNR website: [mndnr.gov/snas](http://mndnr.gov/snas), through the SNA Facebook page, and through Nature Notes – the SNA Program e-newsletter distributed through GovDelivery.com to subscribers and possibly through Tweets on the DNR Twitter site. Specifically, the DNR website will be updated with information on the new or expanded SNAs. Announcements of the acquisitions and some enhancement-related activities will be posted on the SNA/DNR Facebook page.

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 April 1, 2020**

**Second Update November 1, 2020**

**Third Update April 1, 2021**

**Fourth Update November 1, 2021**

Final Report between project end (June 30) and August 15, 2022

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:** 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 mostly 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.

Direct and Necessary expenses are for 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, and funds that are passed-thru to other entities are not assessed Direct and Necessary costs for those activities. For this work plan, landowner payments (~\$1,685,000), acquisition professional services (\$130,000), and CCM contracts (~\$101,000) have not been assessed Direct and Necessary costs. In addition to itemized costs captured in the proposal budget, direct and necessary costs cover HR/People Support (\$23,935), Safety Support (\$4,958), Financial Support (\$18,768), Communication Support (\$6,256), IT Support (\$54,209), and Planning Support (\$5,294) that are necessary to accomplishing funded programs/projects.

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

Enter Total Estimated Personnel Hours for entire duration of project: 33,696 hours	Divide total personnel hours by 2,080 hours in 1 yr = TOTAL FTE:16.2
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**Total Number of Full-time Equivalents (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 a full-time CCM individual placement will be hired for one year (or half-time for 2 years) and \$161,950 in contracts will be executed. If approximately 75% of the contracted dollars go towards employees at the same average cost of DNR staff working on this project, below would be a rough estimate of FTEs. This estimate includes the CCM individual placement.

Enter Total Estimated Contract Personnel Hours for entire duration of project: 5,804 hours	Divide total contract hours by 2,080 hours in 1 yr = TOTAL FTE:2.8
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VI. PROJECT PARTNERS:

A. Partners outside of project manager's organization receiving ENRTF funding- N/A

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

This proposal includes funding for SNA work towards partnership project work on SNAs. Partners include entities, such as The Nature Conservancy, Friends of the Mississippi River, Great River Greening, Sugarloaf Northshore Stewardship Assn., local units of governments, and other non-profits.

**VII. LONG-TERM- IMPLEMENTATION AND FUNDING:**

Without SNA conservation actions, habitats for rare species, and sites of high biodiversity significance are likely to be lost forever. The SNA Strategic Land Protection Plan (of 2014) helps us target our acquisition efforts (on existing public land or through acquisition) to get the best ecological value for every dollar spent. Achieving SNA habitat management, public engagement, and acquisition goals depends upon ongoing support from the Environment and Natural Resources Trust fund of \$5M to \$10M per biennium. Annual/biennial appropriations will also be sought from the Outdoor Heritage Fund and state bonding.

**VIII. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS:**

- Project status update reports will be submitted April 1 and November 1 each year of the project
- A final report and associated products will be submitted between June 30 and August 15, 2022

**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**

## Attachment A:

## Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund

## M.L. 2019 Budget Spreadsheet

Legal Citation: M.L. 2019, First Special Session, Chp. 4, Art. 2, Sec. 2, Subd. 09a

Project Manager: Judy Schulte

Project Title: DNR Scientific and Natural Areas

Organization: MN DNR- Scientific and Natural Areas Program

Project Budget: \$3,500,000

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

Today's Date: August 23, 2018



ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES TRUST FUND BUDGET	Budget	Amount Spent	Balance
<b>BUDGET ITEM</b>			
<b>Personnel (Wages and Benefits):</b>	\$ 1,099,280	\$ -	\$ 1,099,280
Coordinators & Planner (1.78 FTE for 2-yr)			
Specialists, Technicians, & Naturalists (4.67 FTE for 2-yr)			
Laborers & Seasonal Field Crews (1.65 FTE for 2-yr)			
<b>Professional/Technical/Service Contracts</b> -priority given to CCM; contractors to be selected following state procurement & bidding processes	\$ 199,950	\$ -	\$ 199,950
<i>Professional/Technical Contracts</i>			
Activity 1-6:adaptive management plan writing (~\$18,000)			
Activity 2-1: CCM individual placement (.5 FTE for 2 yrs = 1.0 FTE total) (\$38,000)			
Activity 2-2: contracted volunteer events (~\$5,000)			
<i>Service Contracts</i>			
Activity 1-2: woody encroachment removal & invasives treatment (~\$108,950)			
Activity 1-3: prescribed burning, haying, mowing, browsing or grazing (~\$20,000)			
Activity 1-4: site development (fences, signs, etc) (~\$10,000)			
<b>Equipment/Tools/Supplies</b>			
Activity 1: parts, tools, repair costs & supplies for restoration, invasives treatment, prescribed burning, etc (this is largely for SNA tools, such as chain saws, pump cans, drip torches, fire racks, pulaskis, other handtools, backpack sprayers, portable pumps & hose, personal protective equipment, etc, & supplies such as herbicides, spreading oils, flagging, stakes, etc) (~\$24,200); signs (entry,boundary, interpretive & rules signs), posts/hardware, fencing, gravel, & other site development tools & supplies (~\$30,090). Activity 2: citizen science, volunteer events & site steward supplies (including safety items, hand tools, training materials, temporary signs, stamps, envelopes, etc) (~\$10,500).	\$ 64,790	\$ -	\$ 64,790
<b>Fee Title Acquisition</b>			
~300 acres in 5-7 parcels to be acquired by DNR & designated SNA. Primarily fee title (possibly conservation easement)	\$ 1,685,000	\$ -	\$ 1,685,000
<b>Professional Services for Acquisition</b>			
Includes real estate transaction costs & LAM billings; appraisal & review; boundary survey; attorney general; closing costs; recording fees & taxes; etc. ~\$130,000	\$ 130,000	\$ -	\$ 130,000
<b>Printing</b>			
Activity 1: printing of interpretive signs (~\$2,000); Activity 2: brochure, maps, pocket cards, citizen science, educational & volunteer materials (\$3,900).Activity 3: State Register publication (required to designate acquired parcels) (\$1,000)	\$ 6,900	\$ -	\$ 6,900
<b>Travel expenses in Minnesota</b>			
Fleet charges for trucks, cars, & equipment (e.g. skid loaders, tractors, mowers, seeders), mileage, lodging & meals as per state contracts	\$ 193,660	\$ -	\$ 193,660
<b>Other</b>			
Activity 1- MNIT Adaptive Management Spatial Database upgrades	\$ 5,000	\$ -	\$ 5,000
Activity 2-1: Conservation Corps Mn individual placement MNIT computer rental/support and office supplies	\$ 2,000	\$ -	\$ 2,000
<b>DNR's direct and necessary costs</b> (\$113,420 total) pay for activities that are directly related to and necessary for accomplishing appropriated programs/projects. In addition to itemized costs captured in our proposal budget, direct and necessary costs cover HR/People Support (\$23,935), Safety Support (\$4,958), Financial Support (\$18,768), Communication Support (\$6,256), IT Support (\$54,209), and Planning Support (\$5,294) that are necessary to accomplishing funded programs/projects.	\$ 113,420	\$ -	\$ 113,420
<b>COLUMN TOTAL</b>	\$ 3,500,000	\$ -	\$ 3,500,000

OTHER FUNDS CONTRIBUTED TO THE PROJECT	Status (secured or pending)	Budget	Spent	Balance
<b>Non-State:</b> Potential partial landowner & partner donations; any actual \$s would be reported & accomplishments pro-rated.		\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
<b>State:</b> Some SNA acquisitions are funded with a combination of state appropriations (e.g. OHF and RIM). If any activities are split funded their accomplishment acres will be pro-rated.		\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
<b>In kind:</b> DNR office facilities, copiers, computer, communications; supervisor & manager time (but contributions not tracked).		\$ -	\$ -	\$ -

PAST AND CURRENT ENRTF APPROPRIATIONS	Amount legally obligated but not yet spent	Budget	Spent	Balance
<b>Current appropriations:</b> ML15 SNA Acquisition, Restoration, Enhancement & Public Engagement \$4,000,000 Balance: \$21,379 Encumb. & \$371,313 unexpended ML16 SNA Restoration \$1,386,000. Balance: \$102,403 Encumb. & \$971,950 unexpended ML16 SNA Mn Point Pine Forest SNA Acquisition \$500,000. Balance: \$4,714 Encumb. & \$485,310 unexpended ML17 SNA Acquisition, Restoration, Citizen Science & Engagement \$2,500,000 Balance: \$105,203 Encumbered & \$2,328,750 unexpended ML18 SNA Habitat Restoration, Public Engagement, and Strategic Acquisition \$3,250,000	\$ 233,699	\$ 11,636,000	\$ 3,994,978	\$ 7,641,022
<b>Past appropriations:</b> SNA Conservation, Restoration, Enhancement & Citizen Engagement \$1,500,000 (complete) ML14 SNA Acquisition, Restoration, Improvements & Citizen Engagement \$2,540,000 (complete)		\$ 4,040,000	\$ 4,040,000	\$ -

Attachment C:

Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund

M.L. 2019 Acquisition/Restoration Parcel List Spreadsheet

Project Title: DNR Scientific and Natural Areas

Legal Citation: M.L. 2019, First Special Session, Chp. 4, Art. 2, Sec. 2, Subd. 09a

Project Manager: Judy Schulte

Organization: MN DNR- Scientific and Natural Areas Program

College/Department/Division: Division of Ecological & Water Resources

M.L. 2018 ENRTF Appropriation: \$3,500,000

Project Length and Completion Date: 3 years, June 30, 2022

Today's Date: August 23, 2018



#	Acquisition or Restoration Parcel Name	Geographic Coordinates (preferably from the center of the parcel) Format: [Deg.]° [Min.]' [Sec.]" [Hemis.]		Estimated Cost	Estimated Annual PILT Liabilities	County	Site Significance (please include what ecosystem (e.g., prairie, forest, wetland, savanna) is represented as well as the ecological significance, site importance, conservation value, and public benefits)	Activity Description (e.g. fee title acquisition, conservation easement acquisition, site preparation, restoration)	# of Acres	# of Shoreline Miles	Type of Landowner (private individual or trust, non-profit organization, for-profit entity)	Proposed Fee Title or Easement Holder (if applicable)	Status of work (e.g. engaged in landowner negotiations, no longer in consideration, restoration activities underway)
		Latitude	Longitude										
1	Anoka Sand Plain Groundwater Influenced Shallow Wetlands	44° 20' 13.0"	93° 7' 26.6"	\$ 300,000	\$ 2,250	Anoka	A spatial model for the Anoka Sand Plain Ecological Subsection has identified areas likely to have groundwater influenced shallow wetland that harbor rare vascular plants such as Twisted Yellow-eyed Grass (MN-Endangered), Slimspike three-awn (MN-Endangered), and Cross-leaved Milkwort (MN Endangered). There is potential for LCCMR funds to be matched by \$200,000 of mitigation funds to protect these areas.	fee title acquisition	30	0.25	private	DNR-SNA	proposed
2	Cannon River Turtle Preserve SNA addition	44° 34' 44.5"	92° 37' 19.4"	\$ 280,000	\$ 2,100	Goodhue	Floodplain forest of Outstanding biodiversity significance harboring rare turtles and birds.	fee title acquisition	100	0.5	private	DNR-SNA	proposed
3	Chanarambie Creek SNA (new)	43° 54' 22.4"	96° 1' 51.9"	\$ 400,000	\$ 3,000	Murray	Dry hill prairie & prairie meadow (A and AB quality prairie), fee title purchase of a Native Prairie Bank.	fee title acquisition	200	0.5	private (with NPB easement)	DNR-SNA	proposed
4	Des Moines River SNA addition	43° 44' 38.5"	95° 4' 8.7"	\$ 200,000	\$ 1,500	Jackson	Buffer to SNA to aide in mgmt. of native prairie	fee title acquisition	50		private	DNR-SNA	proposed
5	Drake Woods (new)	43° 33' 54.0"	94° 6' 23.51"	\$ 2,000,000	\$ 15,000	Faribault	Best intact MBS mapped hardwood forest in south central MN	fee title acquisition	300	1.5	private	DNR-SNA	proposed
6	Englund Ecotone SNA addition	45° 41' 19.3"	94° 8' 53.2"	\$ 2,148,000	\$ 16,110	Benton	Oak forest, oak savanna, sedge meadow	fee title acquisition	358		private	DNR-SNA	proposed
7	Grey Cloud Dunes SNA addition	44° 47' 30.9"	92° 57' 35.1"	\$ 1,625,000	\$ 12,188	Washington	Natural shoreline on the Mississippi River in the metro area	fee title acquisition	65	0.5	private	DNR-SNA	proposed
8	Lake Bronson SNA addition	48° 44' 5.7"	96° 32' 12.2"	\$ 144,000	\$ 1,080	Kittson	Borders the Two Rivers river and harbors rare orchids on wet prairie of outstanding biodiversity significance.	fee title acquisition	180	0.25	private	DNR-SNA	proposed
9	Mille Lacs Moraine SNA addition	46° 16' 58.3"	93° 51' 10.9"	\$ 750,000	\$ 5,625	Crow Wing	Narrow band of steep moraine ridges with mature mesic red oak forest and small lakes that provides habitat for the Red-shouldered Hawk and Cerulean Warbler.	fee title acquisition	240	1.5	private	DNR-SNA	proposed
10	Middle Fork Zumbro River Forest SNA (new)	44° 9' 8.4"	92° 48' 6.3"	\$ 1,000,000	\$ 7,500	Dodge	Sugar maple - basswood-(butternut hickory) forest	fee title acquisition	300	4	private	DNR-SNA	proposed
11	Pembina Trail Preserve SNA Addition	47° 41' 29.9"	96° 21' 30.6"	\$ 240,000	\$ 1,800	Polk	Wet prairie of outstanding biodiversity significance.	fee title acquisition	160		private	DNR-SNA	proposed



12	Roscoe Prairie SNA addition	45° 24' 54.5"	94° 41' 22.7"	\$ 240,000	\$ 1,800	Stearns	Wet prairie with rare butterfly habitat	fee title acquisition	40		private	DNR-SNA	proposed
13	Rose Dell Prairie	43° 48' 39.9"	96° 21' 14.6"	\$ 400,000	\$ 3,000	Rock	MBS-mapped prairie with rare features. May be the biggest population of Western prairie Fringed orchids on private land in the US.	fee title acquisition	80		private	DNR-SNA	proposed
14	Sioux Agency SNA	44° 42' 32.1"	95° 24' 40.9"	\$ 1,000,000	\$ 7,500	Yellow Medicine	MBS-mapped prairie with rare features	fee title acquisition	150	1	private	DNR-SNA	proposed
15	Wallace SNA (new)	46° 5' 45.7"	95° 38' 21.3"	\$ 5,425,000	\$ 37,500	Douglas and Ottertail	Large high quality sand/gravel prairie with 5 small lakes. Buy Lund 2-1 NPB and Wallace NPB in fee title.	fee title acquisition	775	3	private (with NPB easement)	DNR-SNA	proposed
16	Avon Hills Forest SNA	45° 38' 7.0"	94° 30' 6.7"	\$ 44,500		Stearns	Sand gravel prairie (towards succession to oak savanna/forest)	restoration	13		public	DNR-SNA	proposed
17	Mille Lacs Moraine SNA	46° 16' 55.2"	93° 51' 11.3"	\$ 3,000		Crow Wing	Mesic hardwood forest	restoration	1		public	DNR-SNA	proposed
18	Mound Spring Prairie SNA	44° 45' 56.5"	96° 27' 2.7"	\$ 8,500		Yellow Medicine	Dry hill & mesic prairie	restoration	3		public	DNR-SNA	proposed
19	Sugarloaf Point SNA	47° 29' 11.4"	90° 59' 0.3"	\$ 4,500		Cook	Lake Superior shoreline	restoration	1	0.25	public	DNR-SNA	proposed
NOTES:													

## Attachment D. Additional Work Plan Information for Acquisition, Easements, and Restoration

### 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.

To be acquired and designated as SNA, the site must be recommended for SNA designation in an Ecological Evaluation report which serves as the site's baseline assessment for fee acquisitions. All such sites are predominantly MBS-mapped native plant communities and contain habitat for rare species and Species of Greatest Conservation Need. In addition, SNA staff use the "SNA Candidate Site Evaluation Guide" (initially developed through the ENRTF-funded SNA strategic planning process) which incorporates criteria to rate which sites are currently pursued. Criteria include diversity and quality of the native habitat, occurrence of rare species, occurrence of native plant communities under-represented in SNA system, parcel size, location of parcel in relation to biodiversity hotspots (particularly MBS-mapped areas of outstanding and high biodiversity significance) and other conservation lands (including SNA Strategic Land Protection Plan's Conservation Opportunity Areas and Minnesota Prairie Conservation Plan's Core Areas), potential for long-term management, and additional factors (e.g. landowner readiness, urgency, and willingness to donate; degree of threat, and partnership opportunities).

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.
  - *SNA Strategic Land Protection Plan* – <http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/snap/plan.html>
  - *Minnesota's State Wildlife Action Plan* – <http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/mnwap/index.html>
  - *Minnesota Prairie Conservation Plan* – [www.dnr.state.mn.us/prairieplan](http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/prairieplan)
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.

Each parcel acquired as a new SNA in fee will have an Adaptive Management Plan (AMP) or if as an addition to an existing SNA, that SNAs Management Plan may be amended to add the new parcel. The AMPs include goals, ecological description, priority features with indicators, and management recommendations. The intended outcome of management of SNAs is that 1) all the lands be native plant communities or restored to plant communities that would have been native to the site, 2) these plant communities are sustained over time, and 3) that visitors are accommodated safely (unless visitor access is restricted by designation order). The goals for the SNA'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 monitoring/evaluation) will be covered by a combination funding sources, including, but not limited to, ENRTF, Outdoor Heritage Fund (OHF), federal grants, and other funds as appropriated. Each AMP 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.

The DNR follows Minnesota Statutes 84.033 which require that any land acquired for designation as a SNA must have county board approval as prescribed under MS 97A.145.

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.

As part of the DNR acquisition process, all SNA 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 Division of Lands and Minerals who have delegated authority to approve this for the Commissioner.

#### **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.

Same process as that noted above for fee title.

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.

Same as those noted above for fee title.

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.

Same as those noted above for fee title.

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.

Same as noted above for fee title.

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.

Same as noted above for fee title

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.

SNA's goal is to protect existing high quality, high functioning native plant communities that currently are providing multiple water quality benefits. In addition, the easement terms and the Adaptive Management Plan executed assures that the plant community 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. SNA 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 Scientific and Natural Area easements acquired under this proposal. For each specific SNA 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 SNA 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/enhancement-related activities done with this appropriation are on lands designated as SNA which the state owns in fee or easement.

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/enhancement project will be based upon an 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". SNA restorations typically follow the current BOWSR Guidelines, including Project Guidance, Plant Community Restoration, Temporary Cover and Forest/Woodlands. 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, SNA restorations use seeds of a local ecotype, collected from onsite or within 25 miles. Restoration and management of DNR lands are governed by DNR Operational Order #124 on "Plant Material Standards for Native Plant Community Restoration" and #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/disturbance, and monitoring/evaluation) will be covered by a combination of funding sources, including, but not limited to, 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 and site improvement projects, CCM has been and will continue to be used when appropriate for hand seed harvest, invasive species treatment, prescribed burning, 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.

Plant community reconstruction and rehabilitation 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. Each evaluation report will include a summary of management plan outcomes, activities completed through the project, map of the project area, statement of ongoing management needs and funding, and summary of the evaluation.

# 2019 Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund Proposal

## SNA Habitat Restoration, Public Engagement and Acquisition

