

Final Abstract

Final Report Approved on November 22, 2024

M.L. 2020 Project Abstract

For the Period Ending June 30, 2024

Project Title: Metropolitan Regional Parks System Land Acquisition- Phase 6

Project Manager: Jessica Lee

Affiliation: Metropolitan Council

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Website: <https://metro council.org/>

Funding Source:

Fiscal Year:

Legal Citation: M.L. 2021, First Special Session, Chp. 6, Art. 5, Sec. 2, Subd. 09h

Appropriation Amount: \$1,000,000

Amount Spent: \$1,000,000

Amount Remaining: -

Sound bite of Project Outcomes and Results

The Metropolitan Council worked with Dakota County, Washington County, Ramsey County, and Three Rivers Park District to acquire land for the Metropolitan Regional Parks and Trails System. Over 100 acres of undeveloped land was acquired to protect high-quality natural resources in the metro area and to provide nature-based recreational opportunities.

Overall Project Outcome and Results

The Metropolitan Council works with the ten Regional Park Implementing Agencies to offer a natural resources-based Regional Parks and Trails System that is nationally renowned for its beauty, size, and variety of features. The Regional Parks and Trails System protects significant green space and wildlife habitat, particularly along lakes, rivers, and streams. The Met Council's Park Acquisition Opportunity Fund provides funding for acquisitions of land that has been included in an approved regional park or trail's long-range plan. This ENRTF project provided \$1 million in funding for the acquisition program and was matched with Met Council and agency funds for a total of \$2.2 million. The Met Council works with the agencies to acquire land from willing sellers that might otherwise be sold for development. This appropriation funded the acquisition of five properties- 80 acres for Washington County's Big Marine Park Reserve, 5 acres for Dakota

County's Lake Marion Greenway Regional Trail, 10 acres for Lake Byllesby Regional Park, 3 acres for Ramsey County's Battle Creek Regional Park, and 11 acres for Three Rivers Park District's Rush Creek Regional Trail. All five of these properties are undeveloped land that will be protected, featuring a mix of woodlands, wetlands, grasslands, uplands, and shoreline. Preserving these lands will also help protect Big Marine Lake, South Creek, the Cannon River, Lake Byllesby, the Mississippi River, and Rush Creek.

Project Results Use and Dissemination

The Regional Park Implementing Agencies are responsible for dissemination efforts. Once these properties are open to the public, an ENRTF sign will be placed at the site or at the park's entrance, whichever is appropriate. Often times more land needs to be acquired before trail construction can begin, and for parks, more land needs to be acquired until there is a significant enough area to open that portion of the park to the public, so signs have not yet been placed. As agencies work with their local boards to approve projects, they acknowledge when ENRTF funding is used for acquisition.



Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund

M.L. 2020 Approved Final Report

General Information

Date: December 11, 2024

ID Number: 2020-072

Staff Lead: Michael Varien

Project Title: Metropolitan Regional Parks System Land Acquisition- Phase 6

Project Budget: \$1,000,000

Project Manager Information

Name: Jessica Lee

Organization: Metropolitan Council

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Web Address: <https://metro council.org/>

Project Reporting

Final Report Approved: November 22, 2024

Reporting Status: Project Completed

Date of Last Action: November 22, 2024

Project Completion: June 30, 2024

Legal Information

Legal Citation: M.L. 2021, First Special Session, Chp. 6, Art. 5, Sec. 2, Subd. 09h

Appropriation Language: \$1,000,000 the second year is from the trust fund to the Metropolitan Council for grants to acquire land within the approved park boundaries of the metropolitan regional park system. This appropriation must be matched by at least 40 percent of nonstate money.

Appropriation End Date: June 30, 2024

Narrative

Project Summary: Acquire properties with high-quality natural resources or natural resources restoration potential for the metropolitan Regional Parks System. This project will be matched over 100% with Council and local Agency funds.

Describe the opportunity or problem your proposal seeks to address. Include any relevant background information.

The Metropolitan Regional Park System offers large-scale, natural-resource based recreation opportunities to all Minnesotans. This project proposes to acquire park and trail inholdings that have a broad range of ecological significance, from native prairies, wetlands, forests, and shoreline protection, to an urban property along the Mississippi River. Many of these properties are at risk of being developed if they are not acquired for the Regional Parks System. Most of the trail inholdings are along water bodies and will provide shoreline protection. Acquiring these lands will contribute to the equitable use of the Regional Parks System by increasing access and protecting properties for public use in Carver, Dakota, Hennepin, Scott, and Washington Counties in perpetuity.

What is your proposed solution to the problem or opportunity discussed above? Introduce us to the work you are seeking funding to do. You will be asked to expand on this proposed solution in Activities & Milestones.

The Metropolitan Regional Parks System is owned and operated by the ten Regional Parks Implementing Agencies (Agencies) identified in Minnesota Statutes, section 473.351. Working with the Agencies, the Council has compiled a list of 34 properties that may potentially be acquired between July 1, 2021 and June 30, 2024. The parcels range in size from less than an acre to 110 acres. Some of these properties are under active negotiation; for others, the sellers have expressed an interest in selling to the Agency or are aware of the Agency's interest. Because the timing is uncertain as to when properties will be available from willing sellers, this proposal builds a funding pool which allows Agencies to capitalize on opportunities as they arise.

What are the specific project outcomes as they relate to the public purpose of protection, conservation, preservation, and enhancement of the state's natural resources?

This project will acquire lands for the Regional Park System that are already included in locally-elected board-approved park or trail master plans, but are not currently owned by the Agencies. Acquiring these lands will provide public access to these natural resource-based, high-quality recreational opportunities, while protecting and restoring prairies, forests, wetlands, and shoreline.

Project Location

What is the best scale for describing where your work will take place?

Region(s): Metro

What is the best scale to describe the area impacted by your work?

Region(s): Metro

When will the work impact occur?

During the Project and In the Future

Activities and Milestones

Activity 1: Acquire properties for the Regional Park System

Activity Budget: \$1,000,000

Activity Description:

The Agencies individually negotiate each acquisition. After they have obtained a signed purchase agreement, a certified appraisal, and a resolution of support from their elected boards, the Agencies submit a grant request to the Metropolitan Council. Agencies may close on the properties after the Council has approved the acquisition grant request. The Council serves as the fiscal agent and awards grants to the Agencies through its Park Acquisition Opportunity Fund (PAOF) program. The PAOF program has three major funding sources: Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund (ENRTF), Parks and Trails Legacy Fund (Legacy), and matching dollars. The Council matches every \$3 in ENRTF and Legacy funds with \$2 in Council funds. Agencies must provide at least 25% of acquisition costs from non-state funds. The Council is requesting \$1,000,000 from the ENRTF. These funds will be matched with \$666,667 in Council funds, and an additional \$555,555 in Agency funds, for a total project budget of \$2,222,222.

Activity Milestones:

Description	Approximate Completion Date
PAOF application is open continuously as long as funds remain available	June 30, 2024
Agencies submit PAOF applications as parcels become available, if funds remain	June 30, 2024
Met Council staff present PAOF applications to the Met Council for approval	June 30, 2024
Agencies acquire properties once a grant agreement is executed for the project	June 30, 2024
Final reporting requirements for the Agencies and the Council are met	June 30, 2024

Project Partners and Collaborators

Name	Organization	Role	Receiving Funds
Patty Freeman	Scott County	General Manager, Scott County Parks and Trails	Yes
Al Singer	Dakota County	Land Conservation Manager	Yes
Kelly Grissman	Three Rivers Park District	Director of Planning	Yes
Sharon Price	Washington County	Acquisition Manager	Yes
Scott Yonke	Ramsey County	Planning and Development Director	Yes

Dissemination

Describe your plans for dissemination, presentation, documentation, or sharing of data, results, samples, physical collections, and other products and how they will follow ENRTF Acknowledgement Requirements and Guidelines.

The Regional Park Implementing Agencies will place ENRTF signs at all acquired park parcels. The Agencies and/or Met Council will issue news releases about the approval or purchase of the acquisition.

Long-Term Implementation and Funding

Describe how the results will be implemented and how any ongoing effort will be funded. If not already addressed as part of the project, how will findings, results, and products developed be implemented after project completion? If additional work is needed, how will this work be funded?

This project will provide funding for an existing program managed by the Metropolitan Council, the Park Acquisition Opportunity Fund (PAOF) program. As properties become available for purchase, Agencies will apply to the PAOF program to receive funding. These applications are presented to the Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission, then the Council's Community Development Committee, and then receive final approval from the Council. After the project has been approved, the Agency enters into a grant agreement with the Council. Council staff then works with the Agency throughout the acquisition process, until final reimbursement and reporting is submitted.

Other ENRTF Appropriations Awarded in the Last Six Years

Name	Appropriation	Amount Awarded
Metropolitan Regional Park System Acquisition	M.L. 2014, Chp. 226, Sec. 2, Subd. 07b	\$1,500,000
Metropolitan Regional Park System Land Acquisition - Phase IV	M.L. 2015, Chp. 76, Sec. 2, Subd. 09b	\$1,000,000
Metropolitan Regional Parks System Land Acquisition	M.L. 2017, Chp. 96, Sec. 2, Subd. 09a	\$1,500,000

Budget Summary

Category / Name	Subcategory or Type	Description	Purpose	Gen. Ineligible	% Benefits	# FTE	Classified Staff?	\$ Amount	\$ Amount Spent	\$ Amount Remaining
Personnel										
							Sub Total	-	-	-
Contracts and Services										
							Sub Total	-	-	-
Equipment, Tools, and Supplies										
							Sub Total	-	-	-
Capital Expenditures										
							Sub Total	-	-	-
Acquisitions and Stewardship										
	Trail Easement Acquisition	Parcels: 4 Miles: 1						\$300,000	\$300,000	-
	Fee Title Acquisition	Acres: 240 Parcels: 6						\$700,000	\$700,000	-
							Sub Total	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000	-
Travel In Minnesota										
							Sub Total	-	-	-
Travel Outside Minnesota										
							Sub Total	-	-	-
Printing and Publication										

							Sub Total	-	-	-
Other Expenses										
							Sub Total	-	-	-
							Grand Total	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000	-

Classified Staff or Generally Ineligible Expenses

Category/Name	Subcategory or Type	Description	Justification Ineligible Expense or Classified Staff Request
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Non ENRTF Funds

Category	Specific Source	Use	Status	\$ Amount	\$ Amount Spent	\$ Amount Remaining
State						
			State Sub Total	-	-	-
Non-State						
Cash	Metropolitan Council	The Metropolitan Council matches every \$3 dollars in ENRTF with \$2 in council funds. Council funds will be used for ancillary costs (such as appraisals and legal fees) as well as stewardship and restoration costs. Council funds may also be used toward the purchase of parcels. The Council funds all administrative support for the Park Acquisition Opportunity Fund program through it's own budgeting process (no ENRTF/match funds are used for administrative costs).	Secured	\$666,667	\$666,667	-
Cash	Regional Park Implementing Agencies	The Agencies must provide at least 25% of the total acquisition project cost. Agency funds will be used for ancillary costs (such as appraisals and legal fees) as well as stewardship and restoration costs. Agency funds may also be used toward the purchase of parcels.	Secured	\$555,555	\$555,555	-
			Non State Sub Total	\$1,222,222	\$1,222,222	-
			Funds Total	\$1,222,222	\$1,222,222	-

Acquisition and Restoration

Parcel List

Name	County	Site Significance	Activity	Acres	Miles	Estimated Cost	Type of Landowner	Easement or Title Holder	Status of Work
Baker-Carver Regional Trail #1	Hennepin	Important trail segment; protect woodlands.	Easement - Other	5	0.15	-	Private	Three Rivers Park District	No Longer Being Considered
Baker-Carver Regional Trail #2	Hennepin	Wetlands and woodlands; Six Mile Creek runs through northern portion.	Easement - Other	1	0.01	-	Private	Three Rivers Park District	No Longer Being Considered
Baker-Carver Regional Trail #3	Hennepin	Wetlands protection; Six Mile Creek runs through northern portion.	Easement - Other	3	0.01	-	Private	Three Rivers Park District	No Longer Being Considered
Battle Creek Regional Park	Ramsey	Along the bluff line, wooded property with mature oaks, within the MRCCA, adjacent to the Mississippi River and National Recreation Area.	Fee Title	2.97	-	-	Private	Ramsey County	Purchased
Big Marine Park Reserve #1	Washington	Parcel contains Aspen-Oak woodlands and wet prairies, with a diverse array of native grasses, and wildflowers, as well as red, white, and burr oaks.	Fee Title	39.47	-	-	Private	Washington County	Purchased
Big Marine Park Reserve #10	Washington	Preservation of Mesic Oak Forest	Fee Title	39.34	-	-	Private	Washington County	No Longer Being Considered
Big Marine Park Reserve #11	Washington	Preservation of Mesic Oak Forest	Fee Title	39.17	-	-	Private	Washington County	No Longer Being Considered
Big Marine Park Reserve #12	Washington	Preservation of Mesic Oak Forest and Alder Swamp	Fee Title	39.53	-	-	Private	Washington County	No Longer Being Considered
Big Marine Park Reserve #13	Washington	2235 feet of shoreline on Mud Lake; Preservation of Maple Basswood Forest, Alder Swamp and emergent Marsh	Fee Title	45.09	0.4	-	Private	Washington County	No Longer Being Considered
Big Marine Park Reserve #14	Washington	943 feet of shoreline on Mud Lake; wetland restoration	Fee Title	35.86	0.2	-	Private	Washington County	No Longer Being Considered
Big Marine Park Reserve #15	Washington	Forest restoration and expansion	Fee Title	40.03	-	-	Private	Washington County	No Longer Being Considered

Big Marine Park Reserve #16	Washington	Wetland restoration and forest restoration and expansion	Fee Title	19.62	-	-	Private	Washington County	No Longer Being Considered
Big Marine Park Reserve #17	Washington	2055 feet of shoreline on Turtle Lake; wetland and forest restoration	Fee Title	23.64	0.4	-	Private	Washington County	No Longer Being Considered
Big Marine Park Reserve #18	Washington	992 feet of shoreline on Turtle Lake; wetland and prairie restoration	Fee Title	34.79	0.2	-	Private	Washington County	No Longer Being Considered
Big Marine Park Reserve #19	Washington	1819 feet of shoreline on Turtle Lake; 340 feet shoreline on Mudd Lake; Forest restoration and expansion	Fee Title	15.27	0.4	-	Private	Washington County	No Longer Being Considered
Big Marine Park Reserve #2	Washington	Parcel contains Aspen-Oak woodlands and wet prairies, with a diverse array of native grasses, and wildflowers, as well as red, white, and burr oaks.	Fee Title	39.54	-	-	Private	Washington County	Purchased
Big Marine Park Reserve #20	Washington	Prairie restoration potential	Fee Title	38.54	-	-	Private	Washington County	No Longer Being Considered
Big Marine Park Reserve #21	Washington	1588 feet of shoreline on Turtle Lake and prairie restoration	Fee Title	28.6	0.3	-	Private	Washington County	No Longer Being Considered
Big Marine Park Reserve #3	Washington	This parcel has a combination of mixed hardwood and pine including oak, maple, basswood, and pine.	Fee Title	46.06	-	-	Private	Washington County	No Longer Being Considered
Big Marine Park Reserve #4	Washington	This parcel is mostly cultivated which will be restored to native. It does contain a small portion of woodlands.	Fee Title	79.74	-	-	Private	Washington County	Negotiations In Progress
Big Marine Park Reserve #5	Washington	Prairie and wetland restoration potential	Fee Title	39.57	-	-	Private	Washington County	No Longer Being Considered
Big Marine Park Reserve #6	Washington	Forest restoration potential	Fee Title	39.59	-	-	Private	Washington County	No Longer Being Considered
Big Marine Park Reserve #7	Washington	Preservation of Mesic Oak Forest and savanna restoration potential	Fee Title	78.96	-	-	Private	Washington County	No Longer Being Considered
Big Marine Park Reserve #8	Washington	1600 feet of shoreline on Mud Lake; forest restoration and expansion	Fee Title	25.67	0.3	-	Private	Washington County	No Longer Being Considered

Big Marine Park Reserve #9	Washington	Preservation of Mesic Oak Forest and rich fen and wetland restoration	Fee Title	78.69	-	-	Private	Washington County	No Longer Being Considered
Blakeley Bluffs Regional Park #1	Scott	Minnesota River Floodplain; Silver Maple Floodplain Forest. Site part of many contiguous floodplain parcels planned for protection.	Fee Title	11.87	-	-	Private	Scott County	No Longer Being Considered
Blakeley Bluffs Regional Park #2	Scott	Minnesota River Bluff; Maple Basswood Forest protection.	Fee Title	15	-	-	Private	Scott County	No Longer Being Considered
Blakeley Bluffs Regional Park #3	Scott	Minnesota River Bluff; Maple Basswood and Oak Forest protection.	Fee Title	40.89	-	-	Private	Scott County	No Longer Being Considered
Blakeley Bluffs Regional Park #4	Scott	Minnesota River Floodplain and Uplands; Old field/pasture and cultivated areas have restoration potential.	Fee Title	96	0.4	-	Private	Scott County	No Longer Being Considered
Blakeley Bluffs Regional Park #5	Scott	Minnesota River bluff and ravines. Oak forest and Maple Basswood forest protection.	Fee Title	40	-	-	Private	Scott County	No Longer Being Considered
Carver Park Reserve	Carver	Agriculture land with restoration potential. Southern boundary is Parley Lake.	Fee Title	7	0.14	-	Private	Three Rivers Park District	No Longer Being Considered
Crow River Regional Trail #1	Hennepin	Wetlands and woodlands. Northern portion abuts Crow River.	Fee Title	35	0.31	-	Private	Three Rivers Park District	No Longer Being Considered
Crow River Regional Trail #2	Hennepin	Farmland with restoration potential. Partially wooded. Northern portion abuts Crow River.	Fee Title	0.02	-	-	Private	Three Rivers Park District	No Longer Being Considered
Crow-Hassan Park Reserve #1	Hennepin	Agriculture land with restoration potential. Partially wooded. Northern portion abuts Crow River.	Fee Title	60	0.44	-	Private	Three Rivers Park District	No Longer Being Considered
Crow-Hassan Park Reserve #2	Hennepin	Agriculture lands with restoration potential. Partially wooded. Northern portion abuts Crow River.	Fee Title	65	0.25	-	Private	Three Rivers Park District	No Longer Being Considered
Crow-Hassan Park Reserve #3	Hennepin	Agriculture lands with restoration potential. Partially wooded. Northern portion abuts Crow River.	Fee Title	9.57	0.28	-	Private	Three Rivers Park District	No Longer Being Considered
Crow-Hassan Park Reserve #4	Hennepin	Agriculture lands with restoration potential.	Fee Title	20.88	-	-	Private	Three Rivers Park District	No Longer Being Considered

Gale Woods Farm	Hennepin	Woodlands and wetlands protection.	Fee Title	27.87	-	-	Private	Three Rivers Park District	No Longer Being Considered
Lake Byllesby Regional Park	Dakota	On the Cannon River, with oxbows and river banks, floodplain forest, and cultivated fields that will be restored.	Fee Title	110	1	-	Private	Dakota County	No Longer Being Considered
Lake Byllesby Regional Park #2	Dakota	Park inholding- 6.8 acres of old field to be restored to oak savanna; 3 acres of lowland forest; 0.4 acres of emergent wetland; and a growing Cannon River delta which is an Important Bird Area	Fee Title	10.2	-	\$150,000	Private	Dakota County	Purchased
Lake Marion Greenway Regional Trail	Dakota	Undeveloped land featuring woodlands, grasslands, and 500 feet of shoreline	Fee Title	5.06	-	-	Private	Dakota County	Purchased
Lake Rebecca Park Reserve	Hennepin	Woodlands; northern portion abuts Crow River.	Fee Title	15.14	0.16	-	Private	Three Rivers Park District	No Longer Being Considered
Murphy Hanrehan Park Reserve	Scott	Agriculture lands with restoration potential. Eastern boundary is the Credit River.	Fee Title	51	0.3	-	Private	Three Rivers Park District or Scott County	No Longer Being Considered
Pine Point Regional Park	Washington	This parcel contains upland oak variety and cultivated lands, together used by a variety of wildlife such as deer, pheasant, grouse, etc. The cultivated land will be restored to native oak savanna.	Fee Title	48.52	-	-	Private	Washington County	No Longer Being Considered
Rush Creek Regional Trail #10	Hennepin	Woodlands and wetlands with Rush Creek.	Fee Title	30	0.05	-	Private	Three Rivers Park District	No Longer Being Considered
Rush Creek Regional Trail #1	Hennepin	Woodlands and wetlands, along Rush Creek.	Fee Title	3	0.15	-	Private	Three Rivers Park District	No Longer Being Considered
Rush Creek Regional Trail #11	Hennepin	Along the Rush Creek corridor, heavily wooded with mature trees, steep slopes with pockets of bluff conditions, floodplain, wetlands	Fee Title	8.6	0.4	-	Private	Three Rivers Park District	Purchased
Rush Creek Regional Trail #12	Hennepin	Along the Rush Creek corridor, heavily wooded, bluffs, floodplain, and wetlands	Fee Title	6.6	0.05	-	Private	Three Rivers Park District	No Longer Being Considered

Rush Creek Regional Trail #2	Hennepin	Woodlands and wetlands; Rush Creek.	Fee Title	5	0.15	-	Private	Three Rivers Park District	No Longer Being Considered
Rush Creek Regional Trail #3	Hennepin	Rush Creek, woodlands, wetlands.	Fee Title	30	0.5	-	Private	Three Rivers Park District	No Longer Being Considered
Rush Creek Regional Trail #4	Hennepin	Agriculture lands with restoration potential.	Fee Title	4	-	-	Private	Three Rivers Park District	No Longer Being Considered
Rush Creek Regional Trail #5	Hennepin	Agriculture lands with restoration potential.	Fee Title	5	-	-	Private	Three Rivers Park District	No Longer Being Considered
Rush Creek Regional Trail #6	Hennepin	Rush Creek, woodlands, wetlands.	Fee Title	12	0.35	-	Private	Three Rivers Park District	No Longer Being Considered
Rush Creek Regional Trail #7	Hennepin	Rush Creek, woodlands and wetlands.	Fee Title	8	0.31	-	Private	Three Rivers Park District	No Longer Being Considered
Rush Creek Regional Trail #8	Hennepin	Agriculture lands for restoration; partly wooded.	Fee Title	5	-	-	Private	Three Rivers Park District	No Longer Being Considered
Rush Creek Regional Trail #9	Hennepin	Partially wooded; agriculture lands for restoration.	Fee Title	1	-	-	Private	Three Rivers Park District	No Longer Being Considered
Totals				1,665.96	7.61	\$150,000			

Fee Acquisition

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

The Regional Park Implementing Agencies have identified parcels that are within their approved park or trail boundaries and have high natural resource value or restoration potential. These inholdings are currently in private ownership but negotiations have begun in hopes of the Agencies acquiring these properties to protect or restore their natural resources and provide access to the public. The ten Agencies have identified all properties that meet this criteria and have potential to be acquired within the next three years. Because all of the parcels on this list are crucial to completing the Regional Park System and they all have natural resources value, parcels will be funded as they become available, on a first-come-first-served basis.

2. List all adopted state, regional, or local natural resource plans in which the lands included in the parcel list are identified for the acquisition purposes you propose. Include the URL to the plan if one is available.

Each parcel on this list has been included in a Regional Park or Trail Master Plan. Each Regional Park or Trail has its own master plan with a master plan boundary that identifies all future acquisitions. These master plans are developed by the Agencies, and the Agency Boards have approved them. In addition, these master plans have been approved by the Metropolitan Council upon recommendation from the Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission and the Metropolitan Council's Community Development Committee. Each master plan should be available on the corresponding Agency's website.

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

The Agencies will prepare their own restoration and management plan for each parcel acquired. These plans will identify activities and timelines for natural resource restoration work if needed. They will also identify the long-term maintenance and management needs, the time frame for those needs, and the sources of funding to meet those needs. The Agencies will keep these on file for reference, and Council staff will also keep them in their LCCMR appropriation files.

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.

These parcels will be purchased and held by the Agencies. They are all required to obtain county or park board approval before purchase.

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.

Not applicable

Easement (Other) Acquisition

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

The Regional Park Implementing Agencies have identified parcels that are within their approved park or trail boundaries and have high natural resource value or restoration potential. These inholdings are currently in private ownership but negotiations have begun in hopes of the Agencies acquiring these properties to protect or restore their natural resources and provide access to the public. The ten Agencies have identified all properties that meet this criteria that have potential to be acquired in the next three years. All of the parcels on this list are crucial to completing the Regional Park System. Parcels will be funded as they become available, on a first-come-first-served basis.

2. List all adopted state, regional, or local natural resource plans in which the lands included in the parcel list are identified for the acquisition purposes you propose. Include the URL to the plan if one is available.

Each parcel on this list has been included in a Regional Park or Trail Master Plan. Each Regional Park or Trail has its own master plan with a master plan boundary that identifies all future acquisitions. These master plans are developed by the Agencies, and the locally-elected Agency Boards have approved them. In addition, these master plans have been approved by the Metropolitan Council upon recommendation from the Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission and the Metropolitan Council's Community Development Committee. Each master plan should be available on the corresponding Agency's website.

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

The Agencies will prepare their own restoration and management plan for each parcel acquired. These plans will identify activities and timelines for natural resource restoration work if needed. They will also identify the long-term maintenance and management needs, the time frame for those needs, and the sources of funding to meet those needs. The Agencies will keep these plans on file for reference, and Council staff will also keep them in their LCCMR appropriation files.

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.

These parcels will be purchased and held by the Agencies. They are all required to obtain county or park board approval before purchase.

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.

Not applicable

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 will be completed on lands that are in permanent ownership or that are protected by a permanent conservation/trail 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.

The Agencies will prepare their own restoration and management plan for each parcel acquired. These plans will identify activities and timelines for natural resource restoration work if needed. They will also identify the long-term maintenance and management needs, the time frame for those needs, and the sources of funding to meet those needs. The Agencies will keep these on file for reference, and Council staff will also keep them in their LCCMR appropriation files. Long-term implementation plans will be included in the Agencies' CIPs.

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 Agencies will be required to utilize and follow the Board of Soil and Water Resources guidelines to ensure ecological integrity and pollinator habitat. This will be a required component of the Restoration and Management Plan that they submit to Council staff.

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.

The long-term maintenance and management needs of the parcels being restored are carefully considered and included in the individual park or trail master plans. These costs are included in the Agencies' 5 or 10-year CIPs, which identify future financial needs and funding sources for those needs.

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

Agencies will be required to consider contracting with the Conservation Corps of Minnesota for any restoration activities. This will be a requirement in the Restoration and Management Plan that the Agencies will submit to Council staff. Agencies will provide evidence or a statement of consideration given.

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.

Agencies will be responsible for conducting evaluations both initially after activity completion and three years later as a follow-up. Council staff may also conduct a site visit after the initial activity completion to identify whether goals and outcomes have been met.

Attachments

Required Attachments

Map

File: [2b48b714-c24.pdf](#)

Alternate Text for Map

The PDF contains maps of each parcel in the proposal. When the location allows, maps may contain multiple parcels to reduce the total length....

Supplemental Attachments

Capital Project Questionnaire, Budget Supplements, Support Letter, Photos, Media, Other

Title	File
Background check form	a06f96cd-1d0.pdf

Difference between Proposal and Work Plan

Describe changes from Proposal to Work Plan Stage

Title was changed to reflect the 6th, not 7th, phase. Changes made to the budget to reflect the \$1,000,000 recommendation for funding.

More details were provided for the milestones. The end date for all milestones is June 30, 2024 because we only work with willing landowners and can't predict exactly when parcels will become available. Most likely the funds will be used before then. We also have a wide range of priority parcels so we could either end up funding one or two large parcels or several small parcels, all depending on which parcels become available first.

12/01/21- Added the Lake Byllesby Regional Park #2 parcel.

02/23/2022- Added 17 Big Marine Park Reserve Parcels (Big Marine parcels #5-#21)

Additional Acknowledgements and Conditions:

The following are acknowledgements and conditions beyond those already included in the above workplan:

Do you understand and acknowledge the ENRTF repayment requirements if the use of capital equipment changes?

N/A

Do you understand that travel expenses are only approved if they follow the "Commissioner's Plan" promulgated by the Commissioner of Management of Budget or, for University of Minnesota projects, the University of Minnesota plan?

N/A

Does your project have potential for royalties, copyrights, patents, sale of products and assets, or revenue generation?

No

Do you understand and acknowledge IP and revenue-return and sharing requirements in 116P.10?

N/A

Do you wish to request reinvestment of any revenues into your project instead of returning revenue to the ENRTF?

N/A

Does your project include original, hypothesis-driven research?

No

Does the organization have a fiscal agent for this project?

No

Work Plan Amendments

Amendment ID	Request Type	Changes made on the following pages	Explanation & justification for Amendment Request (word limit 75)	Date Submitted	Approved	Date of LCCMR Action
1	Amendment Request	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acquisition and Restoration - Parcel List 	Dakota County has an opportunity to acquire a parcel for the Lake Marion Greenway Regional Trail. This parcel is within the approved master plan boundary and is undeveloped, providing natural resources benefits including shoreline of a tributary to the Vermillion River. It will be adjacent to a larger conservation area that Dakota County is acquiring for a County park.	May 26, 2022	Yes	May 27, 2022
2	Amendment Request	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project Collaborators - Project Partner Info Acquisition and Restoration - Parcel List 	Added a parcel for Ramsey County, and added the partner information. They have a unique opportunity to purchase an undeveloped parcel along the Mississippi River bluffs, something that doesn't happen very often in an urban area. Added two parcels for Three Rivers Park District for the Rush Creek Regional Trail. These two parcels have recently become available and TRPD is under active negotiations to acquire them.	November 6, 2023	Yes	November 21, 2023
3	Amendment Request	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acquisition and Restoration - Parcel List 	Amended to correct property status on parcel list. Parcels #1 and #2 were purchased for Washington County, but not #4. This was a mistake due to the acreage and property description being similar, realized upon closer examination of the attached maps.	October 30, 2024	Yes	October 30, 2024

Status Update Reporting

Final Status Update August 14, 2024

Date Submitted: October 30, 2024

Date Approved: October 30, 2024

Overall Update

Five properties were acquired with funding from this appropriation. Washington County acquired 80 acres for the Big Marine Park Reserve. Dakota County acquired 5 acres for Lake Marion Greenway Regional Trails and 10 acres for Lake Byllesby Regional Park. Ramsey County acquired 3 acres for Battle Creek Regional Park. Three Rivers Park District acquired 11 acres for Rush Creek Regional Trail.

Activity 1

Since the last update, the final 2 properties have closed and been acquired for the regional parks system. All 5 acquisitions funded with this appropriation went through the Council's Park Acquisition Opportunity Fund application and approval process. Agency staff prepared and submitted applications, Council staff reviewed them for completion and eligibility, and then Council staff brought them to the Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission, the Council's Community Development Committee, and the full Council for approval. After Council approval, agencies entered into grant agreements with the Council. At this time all 5 acquisitions have closed and the Council is only waiting on final reimbursement requests for the final two grants that were made earlier this year. These final payment requests will be submitted shortly. All funds have been obligated and spent.

(This activity marked as complete as of this status update)

Dissemination

The regional park implementing agencies are responsible for placing ENRTF signs at each park or trail location once those locations become open to the public. Throughout the appropriation, as grants were awarded and properties acquired, some of the agencies had articles released about the opportunities. Most of these properties will be open to the public later, after trail construction is complete or after adjacent parkland is acquired, and news articles or press will be released at that time. Often times agencies are working on acquiring multiple parcels of land, and will wait until they have a large enough area for effective maintenance before opening those lands to the public. Council staff will work with the agencies to ensure dissemination efforts continue as those lands become open to the public.

Status Update Reporting

Status Update April 1, 2024

Date Submitted: March 27, 2024

Date Approved: July 2, 2024

Overall Update

Two more properties have been acquired for the Regional Parks and Trails System- an 10 acre parcel on Rush Creek for the Rush Creek Regional Trail and a 3-acre parcel along the Mississippi River Bluffs for Battle Creek Regional Park.

Activity 1

All funds from this appropriation have been obligated. A total of 5 parcels have been acquired with this funding for 4 regional park implementing agencies. Washington County acquired 80 acres of undeveloped land for the Big Marine Park Reserve in Washington County. Ramsey County acquired 3 acres of Mississippi River Bluffs for Battle Creek Regional Park. Dakota County acquired 5 acres for the Lake Marion Greenway Regional Trail, including 500 feet of South Creek, a tributary to the Vermillion River. Dakota County also acquired 10 acres of undeveloped land for Lake Byllesby Regional Park. Three Rivers Park District acquired 10 acres of undeveloped land along Rush Creek for the Rush Creek Regional Trail. All properties have been acquired, and Council staff is working with the agencies on reimbursements and closing out the projects.

Dissemination

Signage will occur on these properties once they become open to the public. The parcels for Lake Marion Greenway Regional Trail and Rush Creek Regional Trail are for trail corridors that are yet to be constructed, so once those trails are complete and open to the public, there will be information released to the public and possible grand opening ribbon cuttings. Signage will be included when trail signage is installed. The parcel for Battle Creek will be kept in a natural state but a sign will be placed. The parcel acquired for Big marine Park Reserve is located in a part of the park that is not yet open to the public. Once enough adjacent land is acquired, this section of the park will primarily be managed for natural resources protection, with some trail development. A sign has been placed on the property and Washington County issued press releases announcing the purchase. The parcel for Lake Byllesby has been signed and will also be managed primarily for natural resources. The Met Council occasionally posts news releases on its website that include recent park acquisitions, with acknowledgement of funding.

Status Update Reporting

Status Update October 1, 2023

Date Submitted: November 6, 2023

Date Approved: November 21, 2023

Overall Update

There has been no activity to report since the last status update. There are several acquisitions in the works. Agencies are obtaining appraisals and working with landowners to finalize purchase agreements. There is a large acquisition anticipated to come to the Council in the next month or two, with a closing before the end of the year, that will use the remainder of this funding plus some of the other appropriation's funding.

Activity 1

There has been no activity to report since the last update, but agencies are actively working on acquisitions on the parcel list.

Dissemination

There has been no acquisition since the last update; therefore there are no dissemination updates. But acquisitions are anticipated in the next couple of months.

Status Update Reporting

Status Update April 1, 2023

Date Submitted: May 8, 2023

Date Approved: May 9, 2023

Overall Update

The Met Council has worked with the Regional Parks Implementing Agencies to acquire three properties so far with this appropriation- one for a Washington County Park Reserve, one for a Dakota County Greenway Regional Trail, and one for a Dakota County Regional Park. There are a couple very large exciting projects in the works that will likely use the remaining of both open appropriations within the next year or so- one that will greatly expand an existing Regional Park Reserve to conserve and protect natural resources, and one that would allow for the opening of a brand new Regional Park. The Agencies continue to negotiate when appropriate for dozens of other projects that are within the boundaries of the Regional Parks System and on the approved parcel list, and any of these parcels could also become available within the next year or so. The Agencies only work with willing sellers, so ultimately which parcels are acquired depends of timing, availability of funds, and the natural resources benefits of the properties.

Activity 1

The Implementing Agencies have acquired three properties so far with many more in the works. These acquisitions were matched with Council funds and Agency funds. Dakota County acquired a 10-acre inholding for Lake Byllesby Regional Park. The property is undeveloped with woodlands, wetlands, and grasslands, just north of the Cannon River. Dakota County also acquired a 5-acre inholding for Lake Marion Greenway Regional Trail. This parcel is also undeveloped and features woodlands, grasslands, shoreline, and 475 feet of South Creek floodplain and upland. Acquiring this parcel will allow for further development of the Regional Trail, while also protecting the nearby habitat and greenway corridor. Washington County acquired a 79-acre inholding for Big Marine Park Reserve. This parcel is undeveloped and features woodlands and wetlands. The addition of this parcel brings the total acreage of Big Marine Park Reserve past 700. When completed, the park will be over 1800 acres, with a minimum of 80% of the park dedicated to conservation and protection.

Dissemination

Three properties have been acquired. Once these properties become open to the public, signs will be placed. Washington County released a news article announcing the acquisition of the parcel, along with the approval of the County parks commission. This part of the park is not yet open to the public, but a sign will be placed once it is. Dakota County acquired land for the Lake Marion Greenway Regional Trail- this trail segment is not yet constructed, but once it is, a sign will be placed. The addition to Lake Byllesby will also be signed once it becomes open to the public. For both acquisitions, the County acknowledged the ENRTF funding source with their posted materials for the County board meetings and approvals. The Met Council also acknowledges the ENRTF funding source with all posted business items and grant approvals.

Status Update Reporting

Status Update October 1, 2022

Date Submitted: September 26, 2022

Date Approved: October 27, 2022

Overall Update

The Regional Park Implementing Agencies are working with landowners to acquire inholding properties for the Regional Parks System. A couple large projects are in the works, and three projects have already been accomplished.

Activity 1

Implementing Agencies are actively working on inholding acquisitions for the Regional Parks System. Two agencies have submitted applications for three acquisitions, and through the Council process they have been approved and have now been purchased. Council staff is working on processing final payment requests for these three purchases.

Dissemination

Three parcels have recently been acquired. Washington County will place a sign for Big Marine Park Reserve once their stewardship activities are complete. They issued a press release after the grant was approved. Dakota County has acquired a parcel for Lake Byllesby Regional Park, and a sign will be placed and news article released once stewardship activities are complete and the parcel is open to the public. Dakota County also acquired a trail parcel for Lake Marion Greenway Regional Trail, and the parcel will include signage once the trail is constructed at a future date. When the trail is complete, there will be an opening celebration where ENRTF will be acknowledged, and news releases will go out celebrating the new trail and the funding behind it.

Status Update Reporting

Status Update April 1, 2022

Date Submitted: May 26, 2022

Date Approved: May 27, 2022

Overall Update

The Regional Parks Implementing Agencies are continuing to negotiate with landowners on several different parcels. The Met Council's PAOF program is a first-come, first-served program, so parcels are approved in the order they are requested. On April 27, 2022, the Council approved a grant for 79-acre purchase for Big Marine Park Reserve. Washington County will be acquiring this parcel in the spring or early summer of 2022. They are also working on a potentially large acquisition for Big Marine Park Reserve, that will likely be requested through multiple parcel purchases over the course of the next two years. Dakota County is also in the final negotiation phase for several parcels on the approved parcel list.

Activity 1

The Regional Parks Implementing Agencies continue to negotiate with landowners on many of the parcels on the proposed parcel list. Because of the pandemic, acquisition activity slowed down significantly in 2020 and 2021, but it is now starting to pick up again. The first parcel to be purchased with this appropriation is the 79-acre Kelley property for Big Marine Park Reserve, which was approved by the Met Council on April 27, 2022. Washington County is expected to close on this property in the next couple of months, and will close out their grant within a year. As mentioned above, Washington County is also working on a very large acquisition for Big Marine that will span the next couple of years. Dakota County is working on a few parcels that are expected to be submitted to the Met Council for approval by the end of 2022.

Dissemination

No properties have been acquired yet, so no dissemination efforts have been made.