



Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund

M.L. 2021 Approved Work Plan

General Information

ID Number: 2021-162

Staff Lead: Michael Varien

Date this document submitted to LCCMR: July 21, 2021

Project Title: Oak Wilt Suppression At The Northern Edge II

Project Budget: \$423,000

Project Manager Information

Name: Shannon Wettstein

Organization: Morrison Soil and Water Conservation District

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Project Reporting

Date Work Plan Approved by LCCMR: July 20, 2021

Reporting Schedule: December 1 / June 1 of each year.

Project Completion: July 31, 2023

Final Report Due Date: September 14, 2023

Legal Information

Legal Citation: M.L. 2021, First Special Session, Chp. 6, Art. 6, Sec. 2, Subd. 06c

Appropriation Language: \$423,000 the first year is from the trust fund to the commissioner of natural resources for an agreement with the Morrison Soil and Water Conservation District to continue to eradicate the northernmost occurrences of oak wilt in the state through mechanical means on select private properties to prevent oak wilt's spread to healthy state forests.

Appropriation End Date: June 30, 2024

Narrative

Project Summary: Suppress oak wilt at the leading edge to prevent infestation in private and public forests to the north and west including Pillsbury State Forest and Camp Ripley.

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

The overall goal for this project is to suppress oak wilt on all known sites in Morrison County. Eradicating the oak wilt sites will protect the surrounding forest, arrest oak wilt spread to the north and west, and ease the financial burden of oak wilt to landowners in Morrison County and communities to the north.

Oak wilt is a burgeoning invasive problem near Little Falls and threatens movement into the Brainerd area. It has the potential to kill significant percentages of trees in the nearly pure red oaks forests of the area. Oak wilt spots in Morrison County are at the edge of the known disease range in central Minnesota. Control of invasive species is optimal at their leading edge. If oak wilt is not controlled soon in this area, it will quickly grow to an unmanageable situation.

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

Morrison County SWCD staff will contact landowners to explain the importance of oak wilt control and seek permission for control. SWCD will use grant funds to contract out 100 percent of the control work, including vibratory plowing and diseased tree removal and destruction. DNR forest health (FH) staff will help the SWCD through their on-going forest health detection surveys and through technical training and advising. If oak wilt is found in the Brainerd area, this grant would be applied there, as well as at other future oak wilt outlier locations in Todd, Cass, Crow Wing, or northern Mille Lacs counties.

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?

While the project is focused on private lands, the public good comes from controlling and preventing the spread of oak wilt to both public and private forests, resulting in preserved wildlife habitat and ecosystem services these healthy forests provide. Oak wilt will be eradicated in all disease locations identified by DNR and SWCD staff where landowners sign up for control, thus enhancing those forests and protecting surrounding healthy forests. Currently there are 85 known unmanaged or partially managed pockets of oak wilt in Morrison County. With projected spread, it is estimated this funding would allow treatment at 95 sites.

Project Location

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

Region(s): Central

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

Region(s): Central

When will the work impact occur?

During the Project

Activities and Milestones

Activity 1: Control Oak Wilt

Activity Budget: \$340,810

Activity Description:

Control oak wilt by mechanical means including vibratory plowing and diseased tree removal and destruction. An optional additional control tactic would be for threatened tree removal (i.e. removal of healthy oaks inside plow lines that likely will die of oak wilt in the future).

Activity Milestones:

Description	Completion Date
Begin oak wilt control on selected properties with known oak wilt pockets	October 31, 2021
Complete oak wilt control on selected properties with known oak wilt pockets	April 30, 2022
Begin oak wilt control on selected properties identified in 2021-2022	October 31, 2022
Complete oak wilt control on selected properties identified in 2021-2022	April 30, 2023

Activity 2: Secure Permission to Control Oak Wilt and Hire Contractor for Mechanical Control

Activity Budget: \$82,190

Activity Description:

SWCD staff will establish face to face meetings with affected landowners to secure permission to control oak wilt on their land. The SWCD will also establish contracts with vibratory plow companies to do the mechanical removal of trees and the disposal of infected wood.

Currently there are 85 unmanaged or partially managed pockets of oak wilt on 48 different landowner parcels. Northernmost sites (closest to the Pillsbury State Forest, Camp Ripley, and Brainerd) will be controlled first. As the disease spreads and where landowners agree, treatment could be funded on up to 95 sites. SWCD will also provide technical assistance to affected landowners throughout the project.

Activity Milestones:

Description	Completion Date
Host an open house for affected landowners	July 31, 2021
Request for Proposal (RFP) for work released via newspaper and vibratory plow company solicitation	August 31, 2021
Secure contracts with company or companies	September 30, 2021
Get signed landowner agreements from affected property owners - known locations	December 31, 2021
Get signed landowner agreements for affected property owners - those identified 2021-2022	December 31, 2022
Provide public outreach materials throughout project	April 30, 2023
Provide technical assistance to affected landowners throughout project duration	April 30, 2023

Project Partners and Collaborators

Name	Organization	Role	Receiving Funds
Rachel Dube	Department of Natural Resources	Forest Health Specialist for DNR Forestry, Northwest Region to provide early detection of oak wilt through on-going forest health surveys in Crow Wing and Cass counties; public notification on oak wilt locations; advise and train SWCD staff on all aspects of oak wilt control; communicate to relevant SWCDs.	No
John Korzeniowski	Department of Natural Resources	DNR Area Forestry Manager for Little Falls and Backus areas will provide assistance as needed to area SWCD staff with landowner contacts and public meetings. Will also provide assistance, as needed, to DNR Forest Health Unit staff.	No
Brian Schwingle	Department of Natural Resources	Forest Health Specialist for the DNR Forestry, Central Region will do early detection of oak wilt through on-going forest health surveys in Todd, Morrison and Mille Lacs counties; public notification on oak wilt locations; advise and train SWCD staff on all aspects of oak control; communicate with relevant SWCDs.	No

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.

Morrison SWCD will provide outreach to the surrounding communities through press releases, radio shows and feature articles and will coordinate with DNR on these publications. Information packets and handouts describing disease information will be available to interested landowners at both the local DNR and SWCD offices. Generic oak wilt information as well as grant details will be updated and made available on the University of Minnesota Extension, DNR Forest Health and Morrison SWCD websites. The Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund 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 Acknowledgment Guidelines.

Landowners who have identified oak wilt on their properties will receive technical assistance and financial assistance throughout the life of the grant and follow-up visits after the grant expires will be available to ensure treatment was successful.

The success of the project will be tracked with the help of the DNR Forest Health Specialist and number of sites infected, treated and success rate of treatment will be shared with local governments, landowners and surrounding SWCD's.

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 be funded?

The DNR Forest Health team receives a forest health monitoring grant to generally survey the health of the state's forest canopy every year. They will monitor the success of oak wilt eradication efforts in Morrison County, and they will continue to track the leading edge of oak wilt in the state. Also, the DNR secured funding to control oak wilt on public lands in the state on priority sites. If oak wilt arises after control efforts have been completed in Morrison County, the SWCD or DNR may seek another control grant for private lands.

Other ENRTF Appropriations Awarded in the Last Six Years

Name	Appropriation	Amount Awarded
Morrison County Performance Drainage and Hydrology Management	M.L. 2016, Chp. 186, Sec. 2, Subd. 04r	\$209,000
Oak Wilt Suppression at its Northern Edge	M.L. 2019, First Special Session, Chp. 4, Art. 2, Sec. 2, Subd. 06b	\$100,000

Budget Summary

Category / Name	Subcategory or Type	Description	Purpose	Gen. Ineligible	% Benefits	# FTE	Classified Staff?	\$ Amount
Personnel								
Project Manager/Administration		Billing, reporting, contract management, support			33%	0.12		\$9,800
Technician		Landowner outreach and technical assistance			33%	0.8		\$71,200
							Sub Total	\$81,000
Contracts and Services								
Private Contractor TBD	Professional or Technical Service Contract	Vibratory plowing, tree felling and tree removal contractor. Competitive bids will be solicited.				1		\$340,810
							Sub Total	\$340,810
Equipment, Tools, and Supplies								
							Sub Total	-
Capital Expenditures								
							Sub Total	-
Acquisitions and Stewardship								
							Sub Total	-
Travel In Minnesota								
	Miles/ Meals/ Lodging	Mileage	Travel to affected landowner properties					\$850
							Sub Total	\$850
Travel Outside Minnesota								
							Sub Total	-
Printing and Publication								
	Publication	Legal Notices	RFP Annoucement					\$80

	Printing	Public outreach mailings	Outreach to affected landowners, information packets on disease and cost share assistance, landowner interest forms and documentation					\$260
							Sub Total	\$340
Other Expenses								
							Sub Total	-
							Grand Total	\$423,000

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
State				
In-Kind	Department of Natural Resources, Area Forestry Office Staff, Little Falls	Assistance, as needed to area SWCD staff with landowner contacts and public meetings. Assistance, as needed to DNR Forest Health Unit staff.	Secured	\$8,000
In-Kind	Department of Natural Resources, Forest Health Specialist	Early detection of oak wilt through on-going forest health surveys; public notification on oak wilt locations; advise and train SWCD staff on all aspects of oak wilt control; communicate to all SWCDs which landowners are affected.	Secured	\$14,170
			State Sub Total	\$22,170
Non-State				
			Non State Sub Total	-
			Funds Total	\$22,170

Attachments

Required Attachments

Visual Component

File: [8efb031a-dee.pdf](#)

Alternate Text for Visual Component

Map shows red oak densities in north central Minnesota with known oak wilt locations pinpointed. The map draws attention to the leading edge of oak wilt infestation located in Morrison County and the proximity to Camp Ripley and the Pillsbury State Forest. The area circled shows the working area of the grant which includes Morrison County but could extend into Todd, Crow Wing, Cass and Mille Lacs Counties if oak wilt were identified....

Board Resolution or Letter

Title	File
Morrison SWCD Board Resolution	b18bf1a6-84d.docx

Optional Attachments

Support Letter or Other

Title	File
Camp Ripley Letter of Support	157a0109-36f.docx
DNR Letter of Support	e846bb05-a8f.pdf

Media Links

Title	Link
Morrison SWCD Oak Wilt Web Page	https://morrisonswcd.org/gallery/fy2019-projects-events/oak-wilt-main

Difference between Proposal and Work Plan

Describe changes from Proposal to Work Plan Stage

Adjustments to the budget have been made to reflect the recommended amount. Adjustments were made to the number of sites we will be able to treat. Dissemination and Activities and Milestones sections have been revised per LCCMR staff request. Language clarified on Activities and Milestone section 2/10/21.

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 agree travel expenses must follow the "Commissioner's Plan" promulgated by the Commissioner of Management of Budget or, for University of Minnesota projects, the University of Minnesota plan?

Yes, I agree to the Commissioner's Plan.

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

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?

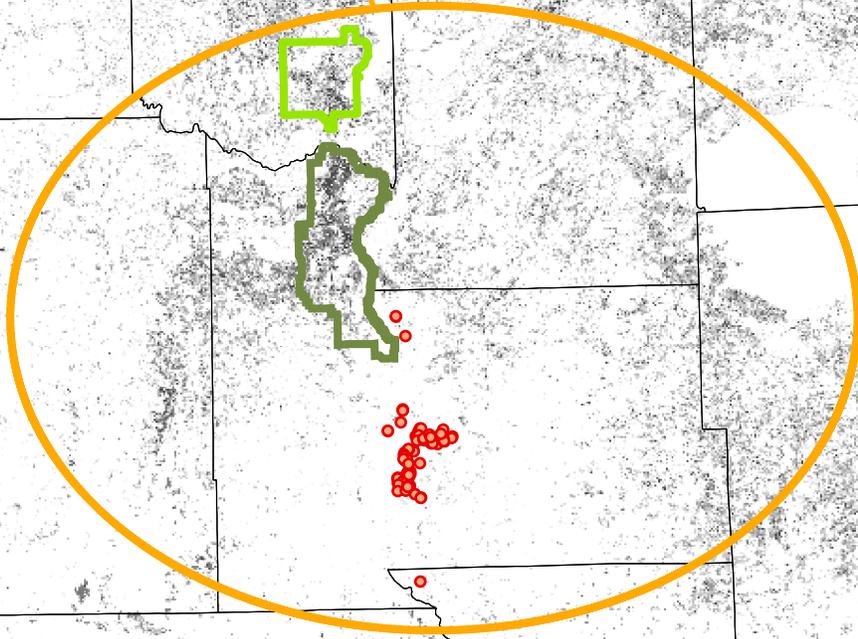
No

Does the organization have a fiscal agent for this project?

No

Proposed zone for oak wilt control from ENRTF grant

Focus area for oak wilt control grant



Legend

- Confirmed oak wilt, 1987-2019
- Pillsbury State Forest
- Camp Ripley
- Red oak group density

Map produced by Minnesota DNR forest health unit on 3/30/2020. Density of red oak is from USDA Forest Service (<http://dx.doi.org/10.2737/RDS-2013-0013>). Mapped oak wilt only represents past confirmations, and some is no longer present due to control. Some undetected oak wilt is likely unmapped.

