

Final Abstract

Final Report Approved on May 5, 2026

M.L. 2022 Project Abstract

For the Period Ending June 30, 2026

Project Title: Living Snow Fence Program

Project Manager: Daniel Gullickson

Affiliation: Minnesota Department of Transportation

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Website: <https://www.dot.state.mn.us/>

Funding Source:

Fiscal Year:

Legal Citation: M.L. 2022, Chp. 94, Sec. 2, Subd. 10c

Appropriation Amount: \$200,000

Amount Spent: \$195,559

Amount Remaining: \$4,441

Sound bite of Project Outcomes and Results

To reduce salt use and protect water quality 2,230 Minnesota native woody shrubs were successfully installed to protect 4,884 lineal feet of centerline miles along Interstate 90 from blowing and drifting snow. The living snow fence planting was completed by a combination of private contractors and MnDOT.

Summary of Project and Outcomes

To reduce salt use and protect water resources MnDOT snowplow operators identified this nearly 1 mile segment of Interstate 90 west of Austin, MN that gave them blowing and drifting snow problems leading to the use of more salt to regain bare pavement driving conditions. Snow fences work to reduce the amount of blowing snow before it reaches the highway, serving as an alternative anti icing tool. According to the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, Minnesota has a growing salty water problem that threatens freshwater fish and other aquatic life. Chloride from de-icing salt gets into lakes and streams, and groundwater that supplies drinking water. It takes only one teaspoon of salt to permanently pollute 5 gallons of water. Once in the water, there is no feasible way to remove the chloride.

As of March 9, 2026 the MnDOT Truck Station has been able to cut their salt use by 76 tons as compared to last winter.

This is significant because they have received 15.9 inches more snow and 115 more hours of blowing snow as compared to last winter. The average living snow fence height is less than 3 feet tall it will take 2 more growing seasons to reach a mature height.

To guard against future insect and disease pests a combination of 7 Minnesota native woody shrub species -American Cranberrybush Viburnum, Arrowwood Viburnum, Nannyberry Viburnum, American Hazelnut, Common Ninebark, Cardinal Red-osier Dogwood, and Fragrant Sumac were planted in the living snow fences along Interstate 90 west of Austin, MN. We tried for 8 Minnesota native woody shrub species but could not find a sufficient number of Prairie willow, *Salix humilis* being grown by the nursery industry to use. Further research is needed to identify woody plant materials native to Minnesota to use in our living snow fence.

Project Results Use and Dissemination

On September 24, 2024 MnDOT District 6 hosted MnDOT's Leadership Development session that including a living snow fence field walk along Interstate 90 west of Austin to communicate the role preventative blowing snow control can play in saving lives, saving time, and saving money while being good stewards of the environment.

MnDOT's Leadership Development program is an initiative designed to help employees build skills for their current roles and advance their careers through tailored training, competencies, and professional development goals.

In my powerpoint presentation I acknowledged with the living snow fence plantings installed using LCCMR funding.



Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund

M.L. 2022 Approved Final Report

General Information

Date: September 15, 2026

ID Number: 2022-297

Staff Lead: Tom Dietrich

Project Title: Living Snow Fence Program

Project Budget: \$200,000

Project Manager Information

Name: Daniel Gullickson

Organization: Minnesota Department of Transportation

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Web Address: <https://www.dot.state.mn.us/>

Project Reporting

Final Report Approved: May 5, 2026

Reporting Status: Project Completed

Date of Last Action: May 5, 2026

Project Completion: October 31, 2025

Legal Information

Legal Citation: M.L. 2022, Chp. 94, Sec. 2, Subd. 10c

Appropriation Language: \$200,000 the second year is from the trust fund to the commissioner of transportation for contracts to build and improve living snow fences consisting of trees, shrubs, native grasses, and wildflowers. Money appropriated in this paragraph may only be used to acquire and plant trees native to Minnesota. This appropriation is available until June 30, 2026.

Appropriation End Date: June 30, 2026

Narrative

Project Summary: Planting Minnesota native trees, shrubs, grasses, and wildflowers in new and/or existing living snow fence sites provides blowing snow control along transportation corridors and decreases road salt use.

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

The volume of snow being carried by the wind can be 100 times greater than the amount of snow falling from the sky. While we cannot keep it from snowing, we can manage the wind carrying tons of blowing snow per lineal foot along a transportation corridor to reduce snow and ice crashes and, improve winter traveler mobility for accessing goods and services. MnDOT's predominately depends on heavy equipment that runs on fuel, such as tractors with snow blowers, motor-graders, and dozers, as well as salt to achieve highways clear of snow and ice for public safety. Catching the snow with living snow fences buys time helping reduce the blowing snow and ice on the highway between snow plow passes. MnDOT has mapped over 3,700 blowing snow problems across the state. These are blowing snow problem areas requiring additional resources in materials, labor, and equipment to maintain above and beyond routine snow plowing.

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.

MnDOT's Living Snow Fence program uses strategic plantings of native trees, grasses, wildflowers, and shrubs along highways to catch snow in blowing snow problem areas. These installations help reduce MnDOT's dependence on heavy equipment to push back and remove snow drifts, thus reducing MnDOT's carbon footprint associated with snow removal operations. They also significantly reduce MnDOT's use of salt containing Chloride, which can persist in waters and is toxic to freshwater fish, amphibians, insects, and plants. Finally, these installations make roadways safer to travel in the winter by improving visibility and decreasing drifting snow coverage.

This project will address blowing snow problem areas on the I-90 corridor between Austin and Albert Lea, MN in MnDOT District 6.

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?

The living snow fence plantings and snow storage areas planted into native grass & wildflower mixes can provide habitat for pollinator species, control soil and water erosion, and sequester carbon, thus providing year round environmental benefits. In windswept areas, living snow fences can reduce salt by 50% or more by capturing the blowing snow, preventing it from sticking on our highways. Chlorides contained in salt adversely impacts water quality, aquatic life, roadside vegetation, and highway infrastructure.

Project Location

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

Region(s): SE

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

Region(s): SE

When will the work impact occur?

During the Project

Activities and Milestones

Activity 1: Installation of Living Snow Fences

Activity Budget: \$139,999

Activity Description:

The native plant materials will be furnished, installed, and maintained by a landscape contractor paid for with ENRTF funds, MnDOT staff using Non-ENRTF funds will be preparing plans, specifications, administering the construction contract to complete the living snow fence planting projects.

Pre-design work requires a field visit to look at soils, drainage patterns, identify construction access routes, looks at existing vegetation cover, and meet with snow plow operators to confirm the blowing snow control problem limits. Pre-design work done back in the office consists of determining blowing snow transport, prevailing winter wind attack angle on the road, road profile, and USDA soil surveys.

Final design work consists of putting together the plan, specifications, and engineer's cost estimate for competitive bids. Also, an internal Environmental Review will be done to make sure the living snow fence project is not impacting environmentally and culturally sensitive areas.

After the living snow fence installation contractor is selected they will have until June 30, 2023 to complete planting operations.

Activity Milestones:

Description	Approximate Completion Date
Living Snow Fence Final Design Work	April 30, 2024
Living Snow Fence Installation Period	August 31, 2024

Activity 2: Maintain Installed Living Snow Fences

Activity Budget: \$60,000

Activity Description:

MnDOT's Landscape Inspection and Contract Administration Manual, MnDOT's Standard Specifications for Construction, and the Living Snow Fence Plan will be utilized to insure the installed living snow fences are properly maintained during the 2 year plant establishment period. Living snow fence project inspection is a specialized aspect of transportation contracting. Unlike concrete and asphalt, plants are living materials that vary in size, shape, texture, color, and vigor from one location, season, and year to the next. Plants are perishable. Whenever they are planted or transplanted they are under stress and prone to diseases, insect pests, and other stress-related problems. The best conceived and designed living snow fence projects may not produce the desired results if plant material, planting procedures, and establishment care do not meet the project intent and specified requirements.

Utilizing MnDOT's contract administration tools referenced above helps to increase consistency and success of MnDOT landscape projects, which will result in lasting value for the environment, community, and taxpayer.

Activity Milestones:

Description	Approximate Completion Date
Living Snow Fence Maintenance Establishment Period	August 31, 2025

Activity 3: Previous work of installing a living snow fence using Highway Maintenance/Preservation Funds

Activity Budget: \$1

Activity Description:

Hoffman and McNamara Landscape Company was awarded a contract for \$201,548.00 on March 28, 2023. The living snow fence planting along Interstate 90 ran from RP 166+00.022 to 166+00.473 and from RP 174+00.613 to RP 174+00.926.

Activity Milestones:

Description	Approximate Completion Date
Installation of Living Snow Fence	June 30, 2023
Previous work of installing a living snow fence with Highway Preservation Funds	June 30, 2023
Living Snow Fence Establishment Period	July 31, 2025

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.

MnDOT will acknowledge the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund for the living snow fence locations where these funds are used by working with our Public Affairs Coordinators to develop and send out local & statewide press releases, conduct media interviews, and post on our website. We will share this information with ENRTF communications team for dissemination. MnDOT will also explore hosting a field day tour to exchange knowledge transfer with the Landscape Nursery Industry, Soil and Water Conservation Districts, United States Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service, County Highway Departments, and MnDOT Districts.

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?

After final living snow fence project contract acceptance it will become MnDOT's responsibility to care for these living snow fences. MnDOT will not be applying for more ENRTF funds to cover the long term costs of maintaining these living snow fences.

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										
Traverse De Sioux Garden Center and Valdez Lawn Care	Service Contract	To Furnish, Install, and Maintain Native Living Snow Fence Plantings				0		\$195,559	\$195,559	-
							Sub Total	\$195,559	\$195,559	-
Equipment, Tools, and Supplies										
	Tools and Supplies	Purchase Native Shrubs and Mulch	Continue the living snow fence work.					\$4,441	-	\$4,441
							Sub Total	\$4,441	-	\$4,441
Capital Equipment										
							Sub Total	-	-	-
Acquisitions and Stewardship										
							Sub Total	-	-	-
Travel In Minnesota										
							Sub Total	-	-	-
Travel Outside Minnesota										

							Sub Total	-	-	-
Printing and Publication										
							Sub Total	-	-	-
Other Expenses										
							Sub Total	-	-	-
							Grand Total	\$200,000	\$195,559	\$4,441

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						
In-Kind	State Road Construction Budget-legal citation for the funds (MN Session Laws of 2021, 1st Special Session, Chapter 5, Article 1, Section 2, Subdivision 3)	Design and Construction Inspection by MnDOT Blowing Snow Control Shared Service	Secured	\$24,000	-	\$24,000
			State Sub Total	\$24,000	-	\$24,000
Non-State						
			Non State Sub Total	-	-	-
			Funds Total	\$24,000	-	\$24,000

Acquisition and Restoration

Parcel List

Name	County	Site Significance	Activity	Acres	Miles	Estimated Cost	Type of Landowner	Easement or Title Holder	Status of Work
Austin I-90 Living Snow Fence	Mower	Highly visible living snow fence project location west of Austin, Minnesota	Fee Title	3.5	-	\$75,000	Public	MnDOT	No Longer Being Considered
I-90 Petrans Bridge Living Snow Fence Planting	Freeborn	The I-90 bridges going over the railroad tracks and County highway are exposed to significant blowing and drifting snow.	Fee Title	45	-	\$125,000	Public	MnDOT	No Longer Being Considered
Totals				48.5	0	\$200,000			

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.

These funds will be used on land owned by MnDOT in either 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.

MnDOT will be looking at dead, declining trees/shrubs in existing living snow fences that need to be replaced, as well as, seek opportunities to plant new living snow fences where they do not currently exist. The expected outcome is to improve the function of existing living snow fences to capture blowing snow keeping it off our transportation corridors. Plans are kept on file electronically (eDOC's) MnDOT's electronic record system. All new living snow fence installations and existing living snow fence improvements will be tracked through MnDOT's Transportation Asset Management System, a management tool for tracking the condition of transportation assets like noise walls, guardrail, signs, pavement markings, signals & lighting. By being in MnDOT's Transportation Asset Management System allows us to track the condition of the living snow fence and create work orders for tracking the cost and activities associated with maintaining these living snow fence assets.

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 Board of Soil and Water Resources -Strategies for restoring resilient, functional landscapes, and maintaining ecological diversity will be followed: Strategic Plant Selection for the Site, Designing for multiple functions, looking to make landscape connections, matching living snow fence plant communities to the site, restoring and maintaining diversity, working with ecological adaption, providing habitat for pollinators & beneficial insects, effective storm water management, preserving & restoring soil health, managing invasive species, practicing adaptive management, and learning from project experience. To guard against insect and disease pests a diversity of native plants will be planted. Plants will be selected based on their tolerance to salt spray as found in MnDOT's Plant Selector online tool. A diverse selection of plants providing a food source for pollinators through the entire growing season will be incorporated into our living snow fence designs.

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 would be achieved by tracking through MnDOT's Transportation Asset Management System with the work to be performed by MnDOT Maintenance Crews, or hiring vendors or local entities to perform the vegetation management maintenance work.

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

Consideration will be given to contracting with Conservation Corps of Minnesota for maintaining these living snow fence plantings after the 2 year contract plant establishment period ends, or MnDOT Truck Station Maintenance Personal will maintain them by incorporating into their Vegetation Management workplans. MnDOT successfully worked with Conservation Corps of Minnesota planting the TH 14 living snow fence in Waseca, Minnesota.

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.

Through MnDOT's Transportation Asset Management System as builds for new plantings will be entered into the system after the work is completed, and calendar triggers can be set within this tool when follow-up visits of the site are

necessary. By integrating living snow fences into the Transportation Asset Management System it allows us to capture all labor, materials, equipment and costs for maintenance operations via work orders to help us see where efficiencies can be gained creating more sustainable living snow fence projects.

Attachments

Required Attachments

Map

File: [c6aba3c5-211.pdf](#)

Alternate Text for Map

Living Snow Fence Planting and Improvement sites along Interstate 90 between Austin and Albert Lea Minnesota...

Supplemental Attachments

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

Title	File
background check certification form	9d92eb71-4df.pdf
SP 2482-82 TH 90 Living Snow Fence	23647523-d5f.jpe
SP 2482-86 Living Snow Fence Project Location	7c8c52dc-c88.pdf
SP 2482-86 TH 90 Plan	9599dbfa-0d3.pdf
SP 5080-185 TH 90 Plan	83c94b23-b82.pdf
SP 2482-86 TH 90 Contract Award	9ecae6bc-66a.pdf
SP 5080-185 TH 90 Contract Award	1e2b0f88-97a.pdf
SP 2486-86 TH 90 Planting	2ed722ed-7ce.jpe
SP 5080-185 TH 90 Planting	d86e060e-77d.jpe
September 24 Leadership Development	e650eff2-112.jpe
Vendor Payments	23c6ff2d-55f.jpe
Photo after March 5, 2025 Blizzard	e6fc440f-a54.jpe
Budget Supplement	0f97e160-ac7.xlsx
I-90 Living Snow Fence At County Line Final Inspection	b32c9ef6-c02.jpe
I-90 Living Snow Fence Median Final Inspection	d08926d4-034.jpe
Proposed Living Snow Fence Plan for MnDOT Truck Station Installation	73bfebda-e70.pdf
Auger with Planting Crew	aada0d99-c42.jpe
Container Grown Shrubs on UTV	e866766d-4c6.jpe
Completed Living Snow Fence Planting	37e0434a-788.jpe
Excel Spreadsheet with Purchase Order Payments for \$200,000 grant	7dcd9181-71a.xlsx

Difference between Proposal and Work Plan

Describe changes from Proposal to Work Plan Stage

This was a legislatively added project, there was no proposal stage, here is the workplan.

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

Do you understand that a named service contract does not constitute a funder-designated subrecipient or approval of a sole-source contract? In other words, a service contract entity is only approved if it has been selected according to the contracting rules identified in state law and policy for organizations that receive ENRTF funds through direct appropriations, or in the DNR's reimbursement manual for non-state organizations. These rules may include competitive bidding and prevailing wage requirements

Yes, I understand

Work Plan Amendments

Amendment ID	Request Type	Changes made on the following pages	Justification For Amendment Request (word limit 75)	Date Submitted	Approved	Date of LCCMR Action
1	Amendment Request	- Activities and Milestones - Attachments	A new SP 2482-86 MnDOT living snow fence planting project along I-90 west of Austin, MN is being developed. As we discussed over TEAMS MnDOT District 6 paid for the SP 2482-82/5080-178 living snow fence planting with their road preservation/maintenance funds. MnDOT Central Office planned on using the ENRTF to reimburse MnDOT District 6, but we missed the end of fiscal year reconciliation to complete the ENRTF transfer.	November 29, 2023	Yes	January 3, 2024
2	Amendment Request	- Other - Budget - Professional / Technical Contracts - Attachments	SP 2482-86 bids came in under our Engineers estimate thus we added SP 5080-185 to our project scope to come closer to spending the \$200,000 approved for this project. The bids for SP 2482-86 came in at \$117,597.60 and for SP 5080-185 came in at \$63,940.00 which leaves us with a \$18,462.40 contingency.	April 7, 2025	Yes	April 23, 2025
3	Amendment Request	- Budget - Professional / Technical Contracts - Budget - Capital, Equipment, Tools, and Supplies - Attachments	After closing out our installation contracts with our contractors we still have \$4,440.82 available to spend. We purpose using the remaining \$4,440.82 to purchase native shrubs to be installed and maintained by the MnDOT Austin Truck Station. With the cost savings we have the opportunity to further the project benefit by having MnDOT Crews furnish their time a labor at no additional cost.	September 19, 2025	Yes	October 2, 2025
4	Completion Date	Previous Completion Date: 10/31/2025 New Completion Date: 06/30/2026	Per LCCMR staff guidance, this completion date change request is being submitted to correct and additional update.	September 30, 2025	Yes	October 1, 2025

5	Completion Date	Previous Completion Date: 06/30/2026 New Completion Date: 10/31/2025	Per LCCMR staff guidance, this completion date change request is being submitted to correct an additional update.	October 2, 2025	Yes	October 2, 2025
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Status Update Reporting

Final Status Update December 15, 2025

Date Submitted: January 27, 2026

Date Approved: February 16, 2026

Overall Update

The MnDOT Austin Truck Station Supervisor said he and his crew would rather take a proactive approach of planting and maintaining living snow fences instead of constantly fighting the wind, snow, and ice with their snowplows and salt. They can already see the difference these plantings are making at holding back snow and helping reduce vehicle spinouts.

With regards to salt reduction, it is hard to quantify an actual reduction as we are only halfway through this winter season, and the shrubs are only 2 to 3 foot tall and not yet reached an effective living snow fence height of 8-foot-tall height for capturing all the tons of blowing snow.

The ENRTF grant provided a unique opportunity to use private landscape contractors to furnish and install living snow fences and for the MnDOT Austin Truck Station Maintenance Crew to now care for these plantings as well as install another 832 lineal feet of living snow fence by themselves to be able to complete the \$200K ENRTF grant spend down.

Activity 1

MnDOT Austin Truck Station crews planted Minnesota native shrubs by purchasing the plant material from a local nursery-Berg's Nursery and Landscape utilizing the remaining funds from the ENRTF grant in October 2025. An additional 832 lineal feet of living snow fence was able to be installed. With the remaining ENRTF grant funds native shrubs from Berg Nursery-Austin, MN were purchased. Berg Nursery was able to furnish native shrubs- American Cranberrybush Viburnum, Common Ninebark, Nannyberry Viburnum, and Fragrant Sumac. The local nursery backs their plant stock with a 1-year guarantee. Working with a local nursery to supply the native shrubs is good for the local economy. The MnDOT Austin Truck Station furnished the labor and equipment at no cost to the ENRTF grant. The MnDOT Austin Truck Station prepared the planting site by mowing the weeds, rototilling the site, planting the shrubs, and applied a wood chip mulch that MnDOT paid for separate from the ENRTF grant.

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

Activity 2

MnDOT Austin Truck Station crews completed the planting operations to fully utilize the remaining funds in the grant and are now responsible for maintaining the living snow fence. The truck station crews are highly motivated and committed to maintaining the living snow fence because they see the future benefits it will provide them in helping them regain bare pavement. Over the last 6 months the MnDOT Maintenance Crew from the Austin Truck Station began maintaining the living snow fence planting beds that were previously installed using ENRTF grant funds by the private landscape contractors Valdes Lawn Care and Traverse des Sioux Garden Center. At no cost against the ENRTF grant the living snow fence maintenance is now being performed by the MnDOT Maintenance Crew. The living snow fence maintenance work consists of watering, weeding, and mowing a 6-foot-wide swath around the perimeter of the living snow fence shrub beds. Plant survival is nearly 100% which can be attributed to the favorable growing season last summer with timely rainfall. Using Minnesota native woody plant species aided in the plant establishment success because they adapted to the soils and climate of southern Minnesota.

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

Activity 3

This activity was previously marked complete.

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

Dissemination

The ground is frozen, so we do not have the signage installed yet. I'm working with the MnDOT State Sign Shop to furnish and install signage marking the living snow fence planting bed corners and MnDOT will cover the cost of installation. This signage will serve to remind the MnDOT Truck Station Maintenance Crew that this was an ENRTF funded project to instill a spirit stewardship of the living snow fence planting over the next 20 plus years. There can be considerable turn over in MnDOT Maintenance personnel over 20 plus years and the signage will serve as a reminder that these living snow fence plantings have a purpose and are not just wild brush invading our roadsides. Because we are on the Interstate the signage will not be seen by the traveling public traveling by at 70 mph. Plus, we do not want to encourage the traveling public to leave the travel lane and walk around the plantings for their safety.

Additional Status Update Reporting

Additional Status Update December 15, 2025

Date Submitted: October 1, 2025

Date Approved: October 2, 2025

Overall Update

This field to be updated when the project is completed.

Activity 1

This activity was previously marked complete.

Activity 2

This field to be updated when the project is completed.

Activity 3

This activity was previously marked complete.

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

Dissemination

This field to be updated when the project is completed.

Status Update Reporting

Status Update September 1, 2025

Date Submitted: October 1, 2025

Date Approved: October 2, 2025

Overall Update

On June 30, 2025 both contractors fulfilled their contract obligations and MnDOT accepted their work and made final payments. Because of wet soil conditions that affected the hazelnut survival a contract change order was made to switch to cranberry viburnum at an additional cost of \$1,679.35. The cranberry viburnums are surviving well in the wet soil conditions. This grant has inspired the MnDOT Truck Station Crews who are now maintaining the living snow fence project with weed control to insure they have an effective living snow fence to control blowing snow. With the \$4,441 still remaining in the grant the MnDOT Truck Station Crews are interested in using those funds to purchase more native shrubs and mulch to install and maintain along the corridor.

Activity 1

Because of the additional cost savings from the contract, we would like to further the overall project benefit through the purchase of additional shrubs and have MnDOT crews install, at no additional labor cost.

Activity 2

Both contractors successfully completed their contract obligations for the plant establishment/maintenance period on June 30, 2025. The MnDOT Truck Station supervisor got the opportunity to watch and learn how the private landscape contractors planted and maintained the living snow fences. With the contract savings we would like to further the overall project benefit through the purchase of additional shrubs and have the MnDOT crews install and maintain at no additional cost.

Activity 3

This activity was previously marked complete.

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

Dissemination

No additional dissemination occurred.

Status Update Reporting

Status Update March 1, 2025

Date Submitted: April 7, 2025

Date Approved: April 23, 2025

Overall Update

The project is going well and we anticipate closing these living snow fence contracts out on June 30, 2025.

Activity 1

This activity was previously marked complete.

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

Activity 2

Plant survival is greater than 90% going into the fall of 2024 for both living snow fence projects. On 11/15/2024 Traverse de Sioux received their maintenance installment payment of \$17,639.64 and Valdes Lawn care received their maintenance installment payment of \$10,999 on 11/15/2024. The wet soil conditions in the median planting led to the plant loss of 20 American Hazelnut which were replaced with American Cranberrybush Viburnum that are more tolerant of wet soils.

Activity 3

This activity was previously marked complete.

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

Dissemination

No dissemination has occurred over the winter 2024-2025.

Status Update Reporting

Status Update September 1, 2024

Date Submitted: April 7, 2025

Date Approved: April 23, 2025

Overall Update

Based on the \$200K budget it was decided to use the Negotiated Maintenance and Construction Contract process.

A Negotiated Maintenance & Construction Contract (NMC) is an alternative contracting method that is based on Minnesota Statute §161.32 subdivision 2 that saves time by simplifying the normal competitive bidding process.

The statute allows MnDOT to award highway construction and maintenance contracts under \$250,000 by simply obtaining at least two quotes for the work.

Although MnDOT cannot restrict competition on NMCs, they are the number one delivery method used by the department to create opportunities for local small businesses to quote on prime contracts.

SP 2482-86 TH 90 was let first and the total project cost came in at \$117,597.60 and was awarded to Traverse de Sioux Garden Center. Because this project came in under budget, we designed let a second living snow fence project under SP 5080-185 to address blowing snow across the I-90 center median. That project came in at \$63,940.00 and was awarded to Valdez Lawn Care and Snow Removal.

This leaves us with a \$18,462.40 contingency budget

Activity 1

Living Snow Fence Design work to prepare plans and specs were completed, and contracts awarded to two companies. Both companies completed living snow fence installation by June 1, 2024.

Upon successfully planting the living snow fence a 70% payment of the bid amount was paid to the Contractors as follow below.

Traverse de Sioux Garden Center received \$82,318.32 under SP 2482-86. 1,398 shrubs were planted protecting 2,810 lineal feet of highway from blowing snow. The I-90 planting starts 1.28 miles west of Mower County Highway 46.

Valdez Lawn Care and Snow Removal received \$44,758.00 under SP 5080-185. 620 shrubs were planted protecting 1,236 lineal feet of highway from blowing snow. The I-90 median planting starts 0.4 miles west of Mower County Highway 46.

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

Activity 2

SP 2482-86 and SP 5080-185 are both in the Maintenance Installation Period where the Contractors are required to water, weed, prune, replace dead plant material and provide overall plant health care. 30% of the contract bid amount is released when the plant maintenance period work is successfully performed based on the payment schedule below.

A 15% payment release will be made on November 15 and the remaining 15% payment release will be made on June 30, 2025, when these projects are finalized.

Activity 3

Utilizing MnDOT's Highway Maintenance and Preservation Funds the living snow fence installed by Hoffman and McNamara Landscape Company is growing well.

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

Dissemination

These living snow fence projects were featured in the District 6 Leadership Development Program for MnDOT on September 24, 2024. The Leadership Development Program is administered by MnDOT's Workforce Development group. Leadership is a shared competency at MnDOT, and this training provides an opportunity to develop and practice skills for career development.

Status Update Reporting

Status Update March 1, 2024

Date Submitted: March 1, 2024

Date Approved: April 24, 2024

Overall Update

The living snow fence design consists of planting 1,398 Minnesota native shrub species such as American Cranberrybush Viburnum, Cardinal Red Osier Dogwood, American Hazelnut, Common Ninebark, and Arrowwood Viburnum. MnDOT is specifying the use of 2 foot tall container grown plant material that will serve as an informal research project to assess if using container grown plant material gives us a faster growing living snow fence, as compared to using bare root plant material that was installed near the project a year ago through SP 2482-82.

Activity 1

MnDOT has completed the living snow fence planting environmental review, final design, and construction specifications. MnDOT began solicitating quotes on February 28, 2024 and we will be opening bids on March 6, 2024. Hopefully, the bids come in favorably allowing us to complete the site preparations and plant installation by June 1, 2024.

Activity 2

The plant establishment maintenance period will not begin until after June 1, 2024 when the plant materials are successfully installed.

Activity 3

No further updates.

Dissemination

We will wait to start our dissemination activities until after selecting a contractor.

Status Update Reporting

Status Update September 1, 2023

Date Submitted: November 29, 2023

Date Approved: January 3, 2024

Overall Update

Through SP 2482-82 MnDOT District 6 used highway maintenance/preservation funds and Hoffman & McNamara the landscape contractor was hired and successfully installed the living snow fence planting this spring and has been watering them with the drought experienced in this area. A plant survival spot check on September 6th found a high plant survival rate of 90% surviving. MnDOT Central Office planned on using the ENRTF to reimburse MnDOT District 6, but missed the end of fiscal year reconciliation to complete the ENRTF transfer to MnDOT District 6.

To utilize the ENRTF MnDOT Central Office and MnDOT District 6 is going to add additional living snow fence planting along I-90 through SP 2482-86 that will connect with the work previously completed through SP 2482-82.

Activity 1

We are currently designing SP 2482-86 to utilize the ENRTF.

Activity 2

Through SP 2482-82 the contractor is performing plant establishment activities such as watering, weeding, and pruning. The area is in a drought but with the timely plant establishment activities plant survival is greater than 90%. The contractor has one more season of plant establishment work which will occur through the summer of 2024.

For SP 2482-86 we have not begun the plant establishment work.

Dissemination

No media dissemination has occurred yet.

Status Update Reporting

Status Update March 1, 2023

Date Submitted: March 1, 2023

Date Approved: March 16, 2023

Overall Update

Developed the living snow fence plans following MnDOT's Process A and B Letting process and the project went out for bid on 2/24/23. There was only 1 bidder, the apparent low bid being Hoffman and McNamara Company. The bid came in \$1,528 over the Engineers Estimate of \$200,000.

Activity 1

The living snow fence pre-design work and final design work are complete and the project went out to bid on 2/24/23. The bid came in slightly over the Engineer's estimate and I follow anticipate MnDOT will award the project to Hoffman and McNamara Company. Now we have to wait for snow melt to begin the plant installation period.

Activity 2

The project has not been installed yet, so the plant establishment Maintenance period has not begun.

Dissemination

Prior to planting the living snow fence MnDOT will be sending out press releases and working with local media outlets to heighten public awareness of this project funded through the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund.