Final Abstract

Final Report Approved on October 20, 2026

M.L. 2023 Project Abstract

For the Period Ending June 30, 2026

Project Title: Minnesota Bee and Beneficial Species Habitat Enhancement II

Project Manager: Josh Pommier

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Website: https://www.pheasantsforever.org/

Funding Source:

Fiscal Year:

Legal Citation: M.L. 2023, Chp. 60, Art. 2, Sec. 2, Subd. 08a

Appropriation Amount: $876,000

Amount Spent: $775,153

Amount Remaining: $100,847

Sound bite of Project Outcomes and Results

Across 13 counties, 21 sites covering 940 acres were enhanced to diverse grasslands that are full of native forbs, sedges, rushes, and grasses which support pollinators and wildlife. Research on 22 restored prairies found broadcast seeding supported early-season floral abundance, flowering plant diversity, and forb cover when compared to drill-seeding.

Summary of Project and Outcomes

Grassland habitat loss and fragmentation continue to be the major factor in the decline of monarchs, pollinators & grassland wildlife. As a conservation community we have restored hundreds of thousands of acres of grasslands over the last three decades. Early restorations rarely considered or appreciated the needs of pollinators, the value of milkweed to monarchs, or vegetative structural & species diversity required by many species of grassland dependent wildlife now in decline. This proposal contributed to the recovery of monarch butterflies and native pollinators by enhancing 940-acres of permanently protected habitat in priority Minnesota landscapes.

Fall 2023 Pheasants Forever solicited applications from local governments, non-profits, and federal partners of permanently protected easements whose vegetative cover was low diversity. Landowners worked with their point of contact to apply, all applications contributed 10% of the project cost as in-kind labor or cash match. 16 of the 21 funded

applications elected to do the work themselves, the other five elected to have Pheasants Forever hire local contractors to complete the enhancement work.
Current understanding of grassland enhancement best management practices that increase diversity is somewhat limited. The University of Minnesota (UofM) conducted research on some enhanced sites to gain understanding of which enhancement techniques practices best increase diversity. During the winters of 2024 and 2025, existing restoration sites were selected. Surveys of 22 existing restorations occurred from May to August of 2024 and 2025. Winter of 2025 and spring of 2026 data were analyzed and report was finalized. Key takeaways from the research are: 1) Native bloom density increased across successive survey rounds, 2) Noxious-weed bloom density was greatest during the first survey round and declined through the growing season, 3) Differences between broadcast- and drill-seeded restorations were strongest during the early portion of the growing season and varied among plant groups.

Project Results Use and Dissemination

Dissemination of project scope and highlights happened through in-person meetings discussing this unique opportunity, webinar, social media posts, and agency specific target audience emails. Examples of these items are included in the semi-annual update photo narratives submitted throughout the project.
The final U of MN report is planning to be disseminated in; 1) publish about surveying methods using the data collected from the project and are working on a manuscript. The manuscript is not done. 2) In a thesis. 3) in a restoration journal to be named in the future. Pheasants Forever will also post it on their website.

Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund

M.L. 2023 Approved Final Report

General Information

Date: October 28, 2026

ID Number: 2023-006

Staff Lead: Tiffany Schaufler

Project Title: Minnesota Bee and Beneficial Species Habitat Enhancement II

Project Budget: $876,000

Project Manager Information

Name: Josh Pommier

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Project Reporting

Final Report Approved: October 20, 2026

Reporting Status: Project Completed

Date of Last Action: October 20, 2026

Project Completion: June 30, 2026

Legal Information

Legal Citation: M.L. 2023, Chp. 60, Art. 2, Sec. 2, Subd. 08a

Appropriation Language: $876,000 the first year is from the trust fund to the commissioner of natural resources for an agreement with Pheasants Forever Inc. to enhance grassland habitats to benefit pollinators and other wildlife species on permanently protected lands and to collaborate with the University of Minnesota to determine best practices for seeding timing and techniques.

Appropriation End Date: June 30, 2026

Narrative

Project Summary: This proposal seeks to enhance grassland habitats to benefit pollinators and other species on permanently protected lands. Research on enhanced sites will be conducted by the UofM.

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

Grassland habitat loss and fragmentation continue to be the major factor in the decline of monarchs, pollinators & grassland wildlife. In Minnesota, 99% of the original prairie has been converted. While we have restored hundreds of thousands of acres of grasslands over the last three decades, early restorations rarely considered or appreciated the needs of pollinators, the value of milkweed to monarchs, or vegetative structural & species diversity required by many species of grassland dependent wildlife now in decline. Private landowners, local, state and federal governments have invested significantly to protect grasslands and wetlands on private lands for the sake of water quality, wildlife, and quality of life in Minnesota. Completing restoration and enhancement activities on lands that increase species diversity of pollinators and grassland wildlife will maximize the public benefits of these prior investments. Furthermore, current understanding of grassland enhancement best management practices that increase diversity is somewhat limited. It is not known, for example, which methods provide the best increase in diversity to a low diversity stand of native grasses. The University of Minnesota (UofM) will conduct research on some of the enhanced sites to gain understanding of which enhancement techniques practices best increase diversity.

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.

This phase two proposal contributes to the recovery of monarch butterflies and native pollinators by enhancing 785-acres of permanently protected habitat in priority Minnesota landscapes. Enhancements will be designed to provide high-diversity native plantings for the benefit of native pollinators, especially the monarch butterfly. Further, we propose to monitor these enhancements in collaboration with the University of Minnesota in an effort to evaluate enhancements, inform practitioners of best practices and provide a path to future habitat enhancements for native pollinators across Minnesota's farmland region. Projects will be solicited, scored, and selected to maximize benefits to monarchs, pollinators and other grassland wildlife.

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 proposal seeks to increase the quantity and quality of diverse native grassland habitats for the benefit of pollinators and other wildlife. Additionally by monitoring these site post enhancement, a better understanding of best practices as well as pollinator usage can be attained.

Project Location

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

Statewide

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

Statewide

When will the work impact occur?

During the Project and In the Future

Activities and Milestones

Activity 1: Conduct project outreach, select projects for funding.

Activity Budget: $27,721

Activity Description:
Pheasants Forever staff will engage with SWCDs and USFWS to assist in the development of quality pollinator habitat enhancement project proposals on RIM and USFWS easement lands. Development will include assessing the current plant community and soil conditions to determine which management practices will produce the highest quality pollinator habitat. Additionally PF will reach out to public land managers at various government agencies (Local, State and Federal) to gauge interest and provide opportunity to enhance habitat. An RFP for each project with information including, acreage, cost, match and overall score will be submitted for all projects. All eligible projects will be considered and compared based on score and funds available ensuring that the highest quality projects are funded. We anticipate selecting 20 sites/landowner projects to enhance a total of 785 acres for Activity 2.

Activity Milestones:

Description	Approximate Completion Date
Distribute RFP, including pollinator project requirements, eligibility, scoring, and information about project.	January 31, 2024
Review submitted projects. Award projects based on scoring and available funding.	March 31, 2024
If funds remain: Distribute RFP, including pollinator project requirements, eligibility, scoring, and information about project.	January 31, 2025
If funds remain: Review submitted projects. Award projects based on scoring and available funding.	March 31, 2025

Activity 2: Enhance habitat for pollinators and other wildlife.

Activity Budget: $622,810

Activity Description:
Pheasants Forever's field staff will work with landowners/managers to implement management plans developed and selected in Activity 1 (approximately 20 sites/landowner projects for 785 acres). This could include assisting private landowners to do the work themselves and/or hiring a private contractor. Additionally, private landowners could enlist Pheasants Forever to hire a contractor utilizing their procurement policy. Estimated average cost to enhance low quality site to high quality pollinator habitat is $1000/acre. Best management practices required by each agency holding protection of project sites will be utilized to enhance project sites (i.e. BWSR's Native Vegetation Establishment and Enhancement Guidelines on RIM easements). Grassland enhancement activities include, but not limited to, tree/brush removal, mowing, tillage, and chemical application to prep the site, planting regionally appropriate high-diversity seed mixes, and maintenance mowing to control invasive species. Sites will be visited by PF, SWCD, or USFWS staff approximately 1-2 times for 2 years to evaluate the progress and determine if additional mowing is needed. Additionally, some sites selected in cooperation with the owner/manager, will have certain variables manipulated by the U of M research staff to monitor the effects on pollinator species as well as establishment practices.

Activity Milestones:

Description	Approximate Completion Date
Work with landowners, and partners to contract all enhancement activities	September 30, 2025
Work with each projects owner/manager to complete enhancement work.	June 30, 2026
Conduct post-construction site visits to assess future mainience needs.	June 30, 2026

Activity 3: Assess, monitor, and report results of enhancement activities.

Activity Budget: $225,469

Activity Description:

The objectives of this research are to (1) determine whether seeding method (drill vs broadcast) and time of seeding (spring vs fall) influence floral abundance and diversity, and (2) invasive plant cover in Minnesota restorations designed for pollinators. Objective 1 is focused on real-world restorations that have already been seeded (on 20 of the enhancement projects from Activity 2). Objective 2 will be a controlled, fully-factorial experiment to focus on the effect of planting method on native plants, invasive plants and blooming forbs. We will test this using (1) existing restoration sites that varied in their seeding method and time of seeding; and (2) experimentally applying seeding method, time of seeding, and their interaction in a fully factorial randomized complete block design on an additional 3 sites (We plan to secure future funding to maintain long term surveys on these plots). Generalized linear models will be used to analyze data collected for both objectives. Research will be done under the direction of Dr. Daniel P. Cariveau at the UofM and will work with Pheasants Forever to gain landowner permission and cooperation to conduct research and maintain research protocol.

Activity Milestones:

Description	Approximate Completion Date
Site selection for existing restoration	December 31, 2023
Surveys of existing restorations	September 30, 2025
Establish and collect data on experimental plots	September 30, 2025
Data summaries and analysis. Preparation of publications and final report writing.	June 30, 2026

Project Partners and Collaborators

Name	Organization	Role	Receiving Funds
Dan Cariveau	University of Minnesota	The University of Minnesota will be doing research on the grassland restoration projects that Pheasants Forever completes.	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.
In general, all publications, signs, and public communications will include either the trust fund logo or will include language indicating financial support. Activities 1 & 2: Pheasants Forever will work with SWCD's and USFWS to identify easements that may benefit from enhancement activities. Owners of these easements will be contacted to participate. Activity 3: Research results and data will be provided by the UofM upon completion of the project.

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?
Enhancement of grassland habitats will yield pollinator habitat results after the completion of the project for 785 acres. Further enhancement provides an opportunity to plan for future management activities to maintain quality habitat on projects. Management activities will be implemented and funded by the owners of the properties and/or government agencies holding conservation easements. By working with easement landowners, this project will increase the awareness and ability to work with government and non-government organization (NGO) partners to make their easement as productive as possible for conserving our natural resources. Results of research provided by the UofM will be available.

Budget Summary

Category / Name	Subcategory or Type	Description	Purpose	Gen. Ineligible	% Benefits	# FTE	Classified Staff?	$ Amount	$ Amount Spent	$ Amount Remaining
Personnel										
Pheasants Forever Field Staff		Work with land owners/managers to complete enhancement projects.			22%	0.99		$64,684	-	-
Pheasants Forever Grant Administration		Complete necessary budgeting, reporting and overall coordination of grant requirements.			22%	0.3		$27,722	-	-
							Sub Total	**$92,406**	**$35,179**	**$57,227**
Contracts and Services										
TBD Private Contractors or Landowner Reimbursement	Service Contract	Field work such as plowing, disking, spraying, seeding, mowing and other necessary practices to enhance grassland pollinator habitat will be completed. Private contractors may be hired by PF or LO. LO reimbursement rates will be set to match rates provided by USDA and/or BWSR.				0		$554,430	$522,626	$31,804
University of Minnesota	Subaward	The UMN will be monitoring enhancement projects per Activity 3: Faculty $10,329, Graduate Student $125,676, Technicians (2 Field 1 Undergrad Research Assistant @ $15/hr): $64,738, Travel (Vehicle Rental, Lodging, Per Diem, Mileage @ $0.19/mi): $24,225, Supplies: $500.				0		$225,468	$216,259	$9,209
							Sub Total	**$779,898**	**$738,885**	**$41,013**
Equipment, Tools, and Supplies										
							Sub Total	**-**	**-**	**-**
Capital Equipment										

							Sub Total	**-**	**-**	**-**
Acquisitions and Stewardship										
							Sub Total	**-**	**-**	**-**
Travel In Minnesota										
	Miles/ Meals/ Lodging	Travel budget includes reimbursement for estimated mileage to projects throughout the proposal area. We utilize the IRS Federal Reimbursement Rate which is currently at 62.5 cents/mile.	PF Field staff will travel to an estimated 20 project locations to assist development of enhancement plan. We anticipate visiting the sites pre enhancement, and twice post enhancement (once per year); however the number of visits and sites visited may vary depending on assistance from SWCD, USFWS, or other agency partner staff.					$3,696	$1,089	$2,607
							Sub Total	**$3,696**	**$1,089**	**$2,607**
Travel Outside Minnesota										
							Sub Total	**-**	**-**	**-**
Printing and Publication										
							Sub Total	**-**	**-**	**-**
Other Expenses										
							Sub Total	**-**	**-**	**-**
							Grand Total	**$876,000**	**$775,153**	**$100,847**

Classified Staff or Generally Ineligible Expenses

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

Non ENRTF Funds

Category	Specific Source	Use	Status	$ Amount	$ Amount Spent	$ Amount Remaining
State						
Cash	BWSR RIM Enhancement Funds	Three project estimates came in over budget, and BWSR is able to step in and help cover the seed and seeding portion of the Johnsonville 28, Redwood Falls 17/18, and Sundown 30 projects.	Secured	$28,339	$28,339	-
			State Sub Total	**$28,339**	**$28,339**	**-**
Non-State						
Cash	Landowner cash	Landowners elected to contribute 10% of their project cost to their project to receive 25 points during ranking. Traditionally landowners who are financially invested into their projects steward them for years to come, ensuring these projects intent will be around for years to come.	Secured	$10,148	$10,148	-
In-Kind	Landowner in-kind	Landowners elected to contribute 10% of their project cost to their project to receive 25 points during ranking. Traditionally landowners who are financially invested into their projects steward them for years to come, ensuring these projects intent will be around for years to come.	Secured	$66,594	$66,594	-
			Non State Sub Total	**$76,742**	**$76,742**	**-**
			Funds Total	**$105,081**	**$105,081**	**-**

Acquisition and Restoration

Parcel List

Name	County	Site Significance	Activity	Acres	Miles	Estimated Cost	Type of Landowner	Easement or Title Holder	Status of Work
Burton 28	Yellow Medicine	Mesic Prairie - The site lies along the western edge of Minnesota's prairie pothole region as identified in our 63 county farmland region of MN priority area. The site is bisected by a stream and adjacent to other permanently protected lands resulting in a score of 100 out of 100 points on our score sheet. Enhancing this site will add habitat diversity to a series of easements which were originally enrolled with lower diversity seed mixes in the late 1990's. Increasing species diversity in this area will aid in helping State of Minnesota held easements adapt to a changing climate and provided habitat for game and non-game species.	Restoration	42.5	0	$25,236	Private	Current - Board of Water and Soil Resources (RIM)	Completed
Burton 29	Yellow Medicine	Mesic Prairie - The site lies along the western edge of Minnesota's prairie pothole region as identified in our 63 county farmland region of MN priority area. The site is immediately adjacent DNR Wildlife Management Areas in which the state of MN has made an investment to benefit wildlife and water quality. Spending money immediately adjacent to these parcels will enhance MN's investment by providing more native grass and forbs for wildlife and water quality. Scoring 100 out of 100 points on our score sheet made funding this site a high priority.	Restoration	152	0	$97,293	Private	Current - Board of Water and Soil Resources - RIM Easement	Completed
Burton 35	Yellow Medicine	Mesic Prairie - The site lies within the core prairie pothole region of MN as	Restoration	79	0	$35,301	Private	Current - Board of Water and Soil	Completed

		identified in our 63 county farmland region of MN priority area. The site is immediately adjacent to a stream/drainage ditch and other permanently protected lands resulting in a score of 95 out of 100 points on our score sheet. Enhancing this site will add habitat diversity to a series of easements which were originally enrolled with lower diversity seed mixes in the late 1990's. Increasing species diversity in this area will aid in helping State of Minnesota held easements adapt to a changing climate and provided habitat for game and non-game species.						Resources - RIM Easement	
Camp Lake 32	Swift	Mesic Prairie - The site lies in the core of Minnesota's prairie pothole region as identified in our 63 county farmland region of MN priority area. The site is immediately adjacent DNR Wildlife Management Areas in which the state of MN has made an investment to benefit wildlife and water quality. Spending money immediately adjacent to these parcels will enhance MN's investment by providing more native grass and forbs for wildlife and water quality. Scoring 70 out of 100 points on our score sheet made funding this site a great candidate for habitat enhancement.	Restoration	19.7	0	$12,115	Private	Current - Board of Water and Soil Resources - RIM Easement	Completed
Freeland 28	Lac qui Parle	Mesic Prairie - The site lies within the core prairie pothole region of MN as identified in our 63 county farmland region of MN priority area. The site is immediately adjacent to a stream/drainage ditch and other permanently protected lands resulting in a score of 100 out of 100 points on our score sheet. Enhancing this site will add habitat diversity to a series of	Restoration	63	0	$29,278	Private	Current - Board of Water and Soil Resources - RIM Easement	Completed

		easements which were originally enrolled with lower diversity seed mixes in the late 1990's. Increasing species diversity in this area will aid in helping State of Minnesota held easements adapt to a changing climate and provided habitat for game and non-game species.							
Granite Falls 11	Chippewa	Mesic Prairie - The site lies on the western edge of Minnesota's prairie pothole region as identified in our 63 county farmland region of MN priority area. The site contains several restored wetlands which aid in water quality and water storage. The site is 1 mile away from a DNR Wildlife Management Area, and ¼ mile from RIM easements. The state of MN has invested in these properties as a home for game and non-game wildlife. Many game species travel ¼ mile between habitat types and working on this easement will benefits the state of MN's RIM and WMA investment. This easement scored 90 out of 100 points on our score sheet. Enhancing this site will add habitat diversity to a series of easements which were originally enrolled with lower diversity seed mixes in the late 1990's. Increasing species diversity in this area will aid in helping State of Minnesota held easements adapt to a changing climate and provided habitat for game and non-game species.	Restoration	50.5	0	$35,622	Private	Current - Board of Water and Soil Resources - RIM Easement	Completed
Hawk Creek 11	Renville	Mesic Prairie - The site lies within the core prairie pothole region of MN as identified in our 63 county farmland region of MN priority area. The site is immediately adjacent to a stream/drainage ditch and other permanently protected lands resulting	Restoration	0	-	-	Private	Current - Board of Water and Soil Resources - RIM Easement	No Longer Being Considered

		in a score of 100 out of 100 points on our score sheet. Enhancing this site will add habitat diversity to a series of easements which were originally enrolled with lower diversity seed mixes in the late 1990's. Increasing species diversity in this area will aid in helping State of Minnesota held easements adapt to a changing climate and provided habitat for game and non-game species.							
Henning 20	Otter Tail	Mesic Prairie - The site lies in the core of Minnesota's prairie pothole region as identified in our 63 county farmland region of MN priority area. The site is adjacent to another USFWS Easement and within 3 miles of a DNR Wildlife Management Areas in which the state of MN has made an investment to benefit wildlife and water quality. Spending money immediately adjacent to these parcels will enhance MN's investment by providing more native grass and forbs for wildlife and water quality. Scoring 95 out of 100 points on our score sheet made funding this site a great candidate for habitat enhancement.	Restoration	72.1	-	$48,972	Private	Current – U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Habitat Easement - USFWS Easement	In Progress
Johnsonville 28	Redwood	Mesic Prairie - The site lies within the core prairie pothole region of MN as identified in our 63 county farmland region of MN priority area. The site is immediately adjacent to a stream/drainage ditch and other permanently protected lands resulting in a score of 65 out of 100 points on our score sheet. Enhancing this site will add habitat diversity to a series of easements which were originally enrolled with lower diversity seed mixes in the late 1990's. Increasing species diversity in this area will aid in	Restoration	21.9	0	$4,789	Private	Current - Board of Water and Soil Resources - RIM Easement	Completed

		helping State of Minnesota held easements adapt to a changing climate and provided habitat for game and non-game species.							
Lyon - Section 28	Lyon	Mesic Prairie - The site lies in the core of Minnesota's prairie pothole region as identified in our 63 county farmland region of MN priority area. The site contains several restored wetlands which aid in water quality and water storage. The site is 3/4 mile away from a DNR Wildlife Management Area, and ¾ mile from RIM easements. The state of MN has invested in these properties as a home for game and non-game wildlife. Many game species travel distances greater than a mile between habitat types and working on this easement will benefits the state of MN's RIM and WMA investment. This easement scored 65 out of 100 points on our score sheet. Enhancing this site will add habitat diversity to a series of easements which were originally enrolled with lower diversity seed mixes in the late 1990's. Increasing species diversity in this area will aid in helping State of Minnesota held easements adapt to a changing climate and provided habitat for game and non-game species.	Restoration	18.35	0	$9,408	Private	Current - Board of Water and Soil Resources - RIM Easement	Completed
Mountain Lake 18	Cottonwood	Mesic Prairie - The site lies in the core of Minnesota's prairie pothole region as identified in our 63 county farmland region of MN priority area. The site is within ¼ mile of a DNR Wildlife Management Areas in which the state of MN has made an investment to benefit wildlife and water quality. Spending money immediately adjacent to these parcels will enhance MN's investment by providing more native	Restoration	0	0	-	Private	Current - Board of Water and Soil Resources - RIM Easement	No Longer Being Considered

		grass and forbs for wildlife and water quality. Scoring 65 out of 100 points on our score sheet made funding this site a great candidate for habitat enhancement.							
Nora 12	Pope	Mesic Prairie - The site lies in the core of Minnesota's prairie pothole region as identified in our 63 county farmland region of MN priority area. The site is adjacent to another CREP Easement and within 1/2 mile of a DNR Wildlife Management Areas in which the state of MN has made an investment to benefit wildlife and water quality. Spending money immediately adjacent to these parcels will enhance MN's investment by providing more native grass and forbs for wildlife and water quality. Scoring 65 out of 100 points on our score sheet made funding this site a great candidate for habitat enhancement.	Restoration	10.5	0	$8,109	Private	Current - MN Land Trust Easement	Completed
Pepperton 5	Stevens	Mesic Prairie - The site lies within the core prairie pothole region of MN as identified in our 63 county farmland region of MN priority area. The site is contains and is immediately adjacent to a large wetland complex. Wetlands are a key water quality and water quantity best management practice. And the site is immediately adjacent to other permanently protected lands resulting in a score of 95 out of 100 points on our score sheet. Enhancing this site will add habitat diversity to a series of easements which were originally enrolled with lower diversity seed mixes in the late 1990's. Increasing species diversity in this area will aid in helping State of Minnesota held easements adapt to a changing	Restoration	116.4	0	$66,636	Private	Current - Board of Water and Soil Resources - RIM Easement. And Wetland Reserve Easement (WRP)	Completed

		climate and provided habitat for game and non-game species.							
Redwood Falls 16_17	Redwood	Mesic Prairie - The site lies within the core prairie pothole region of MN as identified in our 63 county farmland region of MN priority area. The site is immediately adjacent to the Redwood River and other permanently protected lands resulting in a score of 95 out of 100 points on our score sheet. Enhancing this site will add habitat diversity to a series of easements which were originally enrolled with lower diversity seed mixes in the late 1990's. Increasing species diversity in this area will aid in helping State of Minnesota held easements adapt to a changing climate and provided habitat for game and non-game species.	Restoration	88.6	0	$42,750	Private	Current - Board of Water and Soil Resources - RIM Easement	Completed
Rosendale 7	Watonwan	Mesic Prairie - The site lies in the core of Minnesota's prairie pothole region as identified in our 63 county farmland region of MN priority area. The site contains several restored wetlands which aid in water quality and water storage. The site is immediately adjacent to other RIM easements. The City of St. James has invested in this property as a home for game and non-game wildlife. Many game species travel between habitat types and working on this city park will benefit the publics investment. This park scored 65 out of 100 points on our score sheet. Increasing species diversity in this area will aid in helping State of Minnesota held easements adapt to a changing climate and provided habitat for game and non-game species.	Restoration	7	-	$3,105	Public	City of St. James / Meadowlark Prairies Outdoor Lab	In Progress
Solem 14	Douglas	Kensington Rune Stone Parks habitat ranges from a Maple/Basswood forest	Restoration	13.5	0	$5,400	Public	Current - Douglas County -	Completed

		along the lakes on the north end of the park, Oak Savana through the center of the park, and Tall Grass Prairie on the south and eastern edges of the park. The site lies in the core of Minnesota's prairie pothole region as identified in our 63 county farmland region of MN priority area. The site contains several restored wetlands which aid in water quality and water storage. The site is immediately adjacent to a U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Waterfowl Production Area. The federal government has invested in these properties as a home for game and non-game wildlife. Many game species travel between habitat types and working on this easement will benefit the federal governments investment as well as Douglas counties investment in this park. This project scored 65 out of 100 points on our score sheet. Enhancing this site will add habitat diversity to a park which was originally seeded with lower diversity seed mixes in the late 1970's. Increasing species diversity in this area will aid in helping State of Minnesota held easements adapt to a changing climate and provided habitat for game and non-game species.						Kensington Rune Stone Park	
Sundown 30	Redwood	Mesic Prairie - The site lies in the core of Minnesota's prairie pothole region as identified in our 63 county farmland region of MN priority area. The site contains several restored wetlands which aid in water quality and water storage. The site is ½ mile from other RIM easements. The state of MN has invested in this property as a home for game and non-game wildlife. Many game species travel between habitat types and working on this easement	Restoration	13.3	0	$6,984	Private	Current - Board of Water and Soil Resources - RIM Easement	Completed

		will benefits the state of MN's RIM investment. This easement scored 65 out of 100 points on our score sheet. Enhancing this site will add habitat diversity to a series of easements which were originally enrolled with lower diversity seed mixes in the late 1990's. Increasing species diversity in this area will aid in helping State of Minnesota held easements adapt to a changing climate and provided habitat for game and non-game species.							
TBD	Statewide	Permanently protected conservation lands will have grassland habitats enhanced to provide benefits to pollinators and other wildlife.	Restoration	0	-	$32,166	Private	BWSR, USFWS, MN DNR, County, City.	Has Not Begun
Tyro 20	Yellow Medicine	Mesic Prairie - The site lies on the western edge of Minnesota's prairie pothole region as identified in our 63 county farmland region of MN priority area. The site contains several restored wetlands which aid in water quality and water storage. The site is ¼ mile away from a DNR Wildlife Management Area. The state of MN has invested in this property as a home for game and non-game wildlife. Many game species travel ¼ mile between habitat types and working on this easement will benefits the state of MN's WMA investment. This easement scored 95 out of 100 points on our score sheet. Enhancing this site will add habitat diversity to a series of easements which were originally enrolled with lower diversity seed mixes in the late 1990's. Increasing species diversity in this area will aid in helping State of Minnesota held easements adapt to a changing climate and provided habitat for game and non-game species.	Restoration	60	0	$31,986	Private	Current - Board of Water and Soil Resources - RIM Easement	Completed

Wang 1	Renville	Mesic Prairie - The site lies on the western edge of Minnesota's prairie pothole region as identified in our 63 county farmland region of MN priority area. The site contains several restored wetlands which aid in water quality and water storage. The site is ¼ mile away from a DNR Wildlife Management Area. The state of MN has invested in this property as a home for game and non-game wildlife. Many game species travel ¼ mile between habitat types and working on this easement will benefits the state of MN's WMA investment. This easement scored 95 out of 100 points on our score sheet. Enhancing this site will add habitat diversity to a series of easements which were originally enrolled with lower diversity seed mixes in the late 1990's. Increasing species diversity in this area will aid in helping State of Minnesota held easements adapt to a changing climate and provided habitat for game and non-game species.	Restoration	28.5	0	$13,455	Private	Current - Board of Water and Soil Resources - RIM Easement	Completed
Wang 17	Renville	Mesic Prairie - The site lies within the core prairie pothole region of MN as identified in our 63 county farmland region of MN priority area. The site is immediately adjacent to Hawk Creek and other RIM permanently protected lands resulting in a score of 100 out of 100 points on our score sheet. Enhancing this site will add habitat diversity to a series of easements which were originally enrolled with lower diversity seed mixes in the late 1990's. Increasing species diversity in this area will aid in helping State of Minnesota held easements adapt to a	Restoration	12	0	$7,654	Private	Board of Water and Soil Resources - RIM Easement	Completed

		changing climate and provided habitat for game and non-game species.							
Wang 24	Renville	Mesic Prairie - The site lies within the core prairie pothole region of MN as identified in our 63 county farmland region of MN priority area. The site is immediately adjacent to a large wetland complex and other permanently protected lands. It filters agriculture run-off before entering the large wetland. Enhancing this site will add habitat diversity to a series of easements which were originally enrolled with lower diversity seed mixes in the late 1990's. Increasing species diversity in this area will aid in creating a resilient landscape in the face of climate change. The site scored 70 out of 100 points on our score sheet.	Restoration	22	-	$15,400	Private	Current - Board of Water and Soil Resources - RIM Easement	Completed
Wang 28	Renville	Mesic Prairie - The site lies within the core prairie pothole region of MN as identified in our 63 county farmland region of MN priority area. The site is immediately adjacent to a stream and other permanently protected lands resulting in a score of 70 out of 100 points on our score sheet. Enhancing this site will add habitat diversity to a series of easements which were originally enrolled with lower diversity seed mixes in the late 1990's. Increasing species diversity in this area will aid in helping State of Minnesota held easements adapt to a changing climate and provided habitat for game and non-game species.	Restoration	11	0	$6,925	Private	Current - Board of Water and Soil Resources - RIM Easement	Completed
Willow Lake 7	Redwood	Mesic Prairie - The site lies within the core prairie pothole region of MN as identified in our 63 county farmland region of MN priority area. The site is immediately adjacent to a	Restoration	38.34	0	$15,846	Private	Current - Board of Water and Soil Resources - RIM Easement	Completed

		stream/drainage ditch and other permanently protected lands resulting in a score of 70 out of 100 points on our score sheet. Enhancing this site will add habitat diversity to a series of easements which were originally enrolled with lower diversity seed mixes in the late 1990's. Increasing species diversity in this area will aid in helping State of Minnesota held easements adapt to a changing climate and provided habitat for game and non-game species.							
Totals				**940.19**	**0**	**$554,430**			

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 protected by conservation easements, typically RIM or USFWS or on lands in public ownership typically WMA's and WPA's.

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.
Pheasants Forever will work with land owner/managers to complete restoration and management plans in accordance with state statute. These plans will likely be housed by both Pheasants Forever and the agency that owns the land or easement on the land. Long term implementation of these plans will be the responsibility of the owner/manager of the property.

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.
These restoration efforts will follow BWSRs "Native Vegetation Establishment and Enhancement Guidelines" as well as best practices established by MN DNR and USFWS to ensure ecological integrity and pollinator enhancement.

4. Describe how the long-term maintenance and management needs of the parcel being restored with these funds will be met and financed into the future.
Long-term maintenance and management of these site will be the responsibility of the owner/land manager. We hope to use this oppurtunity to work with the owners/managers to develop a management plan. Additionally one of our ranking criteria will be the implementation of a management plan. Therefore proposal that will manage the investment into the future are more likely to be funded.

5. Describe how consideration will be given to contracting with Conservation Corps of Minnesota for any restoration activities.
We will notify the Conservation Corps of Minnesota if we are funded and make them aware of the restoration activities we are completing.

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.
Evaluation will be completed on parcel where activities were implemented both initially after activity completion and three years later.

Attachments

Required Attachments

Map

File: 98d74a72-018.pdf

Alternate Text for Map

Map depicts the counties of Minnesota the proposal prioritizes as well as the USFWS and BWSR easements where the majority of these projects will be completed....

Financial Capacity

File: 188415ca-712.pdf

Board Resolution or Letter

Title	File
PF CEO approval letter	93e3e726-a86.pdf

Supplemental Attachments

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

Title	File
Background Check Certification Form - SA Signed	12a00da3-e45.pdf
Approved Research Addendum	1e51a2a2-0aa.pdf
Outreach and Dissemination examples for this project.	4665ad00-8ff.docx
April 1 2025 Status Update Photo Narrative	fa3f2108-8ba.pdf
October 1 2025 Status Update Photo Narrative	8b4ebd0d-5b4.pdf
Henning 20 Parcel Map - Added Parcel	61604f16-ced.pdf
April 1 2026 U of MN Update and Draft Study Report	23cc5350-da9.pdf
April 1 2026 Photo Narrative	09bce99d-de4.pdf
U of MN Final Report	9212e52a-9e9.pdf
Henning 20 Bid Documents	8aee32fd-e99.pdf
Rosendale 7 Restoration Plan	325a8f58-6f6.pdf
Match Summary by Project	e8978e68-3b6.xlsx
Final Status Update Photo Narrative	45a51519-ce9.pdf
Project Maps	9a40e26d-2ee.pdf
Entomological Society of America Presentation	751b4eb0-086.pdf

Difference between Proposal and Work Plan

Describe changes from Proposal to Work Plan Stage

We have made changes per the requested revisions and have noted any comments.

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?

Yes, I understand the Commissioner's Plan applies.

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?

Yes

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

Not acknowledged

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	• Budget • Other • Attachments • Acquisition and Restoration - Parcel List	We needed to add parcels for our restoration projects. Each parcel received some funding from our statewide restoration proposal. We needed to adjust our proposed parcel list, estimated cost and acre table to reflect each parcel addition. We also added a document with our dissemination and outreach efforts to coincide with our April 1 report.	March 26, 2024	Yes	April 23, 2024
2	Amendment Request	• Budget • Other • Acquisition and Restoration - Parcel List • Budget - Professional / Technical Contracts • Budget - Travel and Conferences • Budget - Non-ENRTF Funds Contributed • Attachments	High precipitation this summer left some projects underwater, one cancelled and others reduced their acreage. Added Henning 20 parcel to make up for cancelled project. Landowners' estimated costs were incorrect with actual costs and needed to adjust budgets, some went down, but most went up. BWSR is able to offer financial assistance to a couple projects whose projected costs were over our budget. U of MN guided research objectives caused one project's cost to increase.	October 14, 2025	Yes	October 17, 2025
3	Amendment Request	• Acquisition and Restoration - Parcel List	Full implications of high spring/summer precipitation led to reduction of acres/budgets for Wang 1, Wang 17, Wang 28. Henning 20 sent in updated acreages and areas for enhancement that fit the grant's activities.	December 31, 2025	Yes	January 6, 2026
4	Amendment Request	• Budget - Non-ENRTF Funds Contributed • Attachments • Acquisition and Restoration - Parcel List	Nora 12 costs are coming in higher due to prevailing wage, and need to adjust budget. Wang 1 - Local staff lost the invoice for some site prep work, subsequent discussions with landowner realized the mistake. Budget reduction	March 20, 2026	Yes	March 25, 2026

			from Amendment 3 shouldn't have been so low, and need to re-adjust project budget. Removed $100,000 of federal in-kind non-ENRTF funds because we added landowner in-kind, landowner cash, and state cash in previous Amendment Requests.			
5	Amendment Request	• Acquisition and Restoration - Parcel List	Removed Mountain lake 18 acres and budget because project was cancelled over a year ago, but I had not updated those columns. Somehow Freeland 28 project got removed from parcel list, so I added it back in. Reduced budgets for Redwood Falls 17/18 and Johnsonville 28 due to BWSR funding the seed/seeding portions of projects, those funds were already accounted for in previous updates under Non-ENRTF Funds - BWSR Enhancement.	June 1, 2026	Yes	June 4, 2026
6	Amendment Request	• Budget - Professional / Technical Contracts • Budget - Non-ENRTF Funds Contributed • Attachments • Acquisition and Restoration - Parcel List	Modified Updated Cost column for each Parcel to accurately reflect the cost of each restoration. Updated non-ENRTF funds to reflect actual match contributed to project as instructed by LCCMR Staff. Restoration costs came in under budget due to reasons of reduced weeds needing to be sprayed, increased landowner match, seed mix prices were less than quoted.	August 14, 2026	Yes	September 1, 2026

Status Update Reporting

Final Status Update August 14, 2026

Date Submitted: September 3, 2026

Date Approved: September 4, 2026

Overall Update

We exceeded our proposed acre outcomes by enhancing 940 acres of permanently protected land across Minnesota. The diversity of grassland habitats for pollinators and other wildlife is improved on 21 different properties. Monitoring sub awarded to U of Minnesota is complete along with a Final monitoring report. BWSR funding assisted 3 projects in seed and seeding costs due to higher than expected site preparation expenses. See photo narrative in Tab 7 Attachments.

Activity 1

This activity was previously marked complete.
(This activity marked as complete as of this status update)

Activity 2

Since the last update:

- 19 sites are site prepped, seeded, and complete
- 2 projects are utilizing partner funds to complete the seed and seeding after 06/30/2026 LCCMR grant deadline.

The request for quotes and project plan are listed in tab 7 attachments.
Pheasants Forever hired the contractor in 5 of the enhancement sites, all procurement policies were followed in selecting the contractor. The landowner chose to complete the work in 16 of the enhancement sites, and referenced the Iowa Custom Farm Rates guide along with comparison to the NRCS 327 Practice Standard #22 Monarch Species Mix for appropriate cost analysis.
In summary 940 acres were enhanced between 21 sites. Our budget was less than expected due to funding from other agencies and landowner match.
After final seeding and mowing, each of the enhancements were visited by local staff to determine if follow-up actions are needed. Any follow-up actions are communicated to the landowner through phone conversations, in-person meetings or letter, completing milestone #3. Additional inspections will occur on RIM and WRE easements every three years by local Field Office staff.
(This activity marked as complete as of this status update)

Activity 3

During the winters of 2024 and 2025, existing restoration sites were selected, completing milestone #1. Filtering through 2017 MN Bee and Beneficial Species Habitat Restoration and other Fish and Wildlife eligible sites, 22 were selected for surveying. Surveys 22 existing restorations occurred May to August of 2024 and 2025 completing milestones #2 and #3. Winter of 2025 and spring of 2026 data was analyzed and report was finalized, completing milestone #4.

Since last update, to summarize the final report:

- 22 restored prairies from 2.0 to 51.8 hectares in size that were seeded approximately 6-8 years prior to sampling.
  - Seeding methods and timing were determined from a records review from partners.
  - Sampling methods described in the final report in tab 7.
- Results:
  - 140 flowering plant species representing 90 genera were observed.
  - 27,072 square meters of quadrants representing over 600 transects.

o 520,477 flowers were counted.
o Native bloom density increased across successive survey rounds.
o Noxious-weed bloom density was greatest during the first survey round and declined through the growing season.
o Differences between broadcast- and drill-seeded restorations were strongest during the early portion of the growing season and varied among plant groups.
(This activity marked as complete as of this status update)

Dissemination
The final U of MN report is a project produced a comprehensive dataset describing floral resource availability and vegetation composition in restored Minnesota prairies. The dataset includes site and survey information, plant taxonomic information, floral abundance and area measurements, and vegetation-cover data. By making these data openly accessible, the project extends its value beyond the grant period and provides a resource for researchers, restoration practitioners, and future projects evaluating prairie establishment and pollinator habitat. U of MN are planning to disseminate the information in at least 3 methods; (1) publish about surveying methods using the data collected from the project and are working on a manuscript. The manuscript is not done. (2) In a thesis. (3) in a restoration journal to be named in the future. Pheasants Forever will also post it on their website.
Through personal conversations with landowners, they were all very excited and appreciate of the funding to accomplish these projects. Neighbors are asking if their properties are eligible, and thankfully BWSR has some funding to help those neighbors. That funding is not enough to meet the demand of landowners looking for enhancement opportunities.

Status Update Reporting

Status Update April 1, 2026

Date Submitted: March 25, 2026

Date Approved: March 31, 2026

Overall Update
We are on track to meeting the outcomes of this proposal. Due to high precipitation last year we had a couple sites withdraw their applications, and we were able to add one new site. We have two landowners who do not return phone calls in a timely manner. To date, we have paid them for the site prep and have additional site-prep needed to prepare the site for seeding this spring, BWSR funding is assisting in seed and seeding costs. Everyone else is responsive and on schedule. University of Minnesota has completed their monitoring and working on reviewing the data. See photo narrative in Tab 7 Attachments.

Activity 1
Milestones 1, 2, 3, and 4 are now complete for Activity #1. The initial RFP and the one new site we added last reporting period are awarded and allocated funds. No new applications or sites will be considered for this project. We are on track to exceed our 785 acre goal of restoration with over 20 project sites.
(This activity marked as complete as of this status update)

Activity 2
Since the last update, our total project acres is reduced to 940 due to a project tracking error. We have 21 sites remaining. To date:

- 16 projects are seeded. 1 of the 16 sites need to add additional forb seed due to incorrect seed mix being used the first time.
- 1 project is partially seeded, with the final field to be seeded this spring
- 2 projects have an extension to be seeded by June 15, 2026
- 2 projects are utilizing partner funds to complete seed and seeding after the 06/30/2026 LCCMR grant deadline.

LCCMR funds were utilized to prepare the site for seeding through brush/tree removal and limited site preparation. Pheasants Forever is hiring the contractor in 5 of the enhancement sites, all procurement policies were followed in selecting the contractor. The landowner chose to complete the work in 16 of the enhancement sites, and referenced the Iowa Custom Farm Rates guide along with comparison to the NRCS 327 Practice Standard #22 Monarch Species Mix for appropriate cost analysis.

Activity 3
All data has been cleaned and we have begun data analysis. I received external funding for conference travel to the Entomological Society of America meeting in November 2025 where I presented preliminary results using the data collected.
Preliminary results for the differences in blooming area and diversity of blooming species is presented below. These results do not take into account management history or timing of seeding, so they should be interpreted with caution until our final analysis is complete. Next steps are to finish analysis for forb:grass cover ratios and timing of seeding. These preliminary results indicate that broadcast-seeded plots had high bloom density than drill-seeded plots in the early season. In August we see peak bloom density for native species, with higher median bloom density in broadcast sites. We see higher bloom density of noxious weeds across the season in broadcast sites. Hill Diversity for species richness indicates that we observe higher diversity of blooms in broadcast sites across the season.

Dissemination
We were able to post a project update on one of the easements on social media. The ENRTF signs have not been

verified that they are posted on project sites. We are still working with project managers to get more pictures posted on line and to work on outreach related events.

Status Update Reporting

Status Update October 1, 2025

Date Submitted: September 26, 2025

Date Approved: October 6, 2025

Overall Update

We are on track to meeting the outcomes of this proposal. All sites are chosen for enhancement and U of MN is on track with their monitoring. Nearly all the landowners are doing a good job preparing their properties for a fall dormant seeding. Seed has been spread on five properties. In total, 2 projects are completed. The rest of the projects still have some sort of seeding or mowing activity left to complete. We had one landowner cancel their project and a couple others reduce their enhancement acres due to the unusually high amount of precipitation this summer leaving their sites too wet for equipment. Seed was spread on three additional projects, but upon inspection of the seed tags, we realized the landowner spread the wrong seed mix. We are working with them on installing additional seeds to meet the project's diversity standards. Those sites are still in process and not included in our 5 sites where the seeding is complete. See photo narrative in Tab 7 Attachments.

Activity 1

Our initial RFP process yielded great success, and we selected 22 sites for funding. Over the past year, one landowner withdrew their application due to changes within their personal life, one landowner withdrew because their site was under water, and a couple other project acres reduced because portions of their sites are under water. This is leaving us with close to $35,000 of unspent funds. Through conversations with other partners, we identified a need for a US FWS easement in Otter Tail County in need of restoration and amended it to our parcel list to help accomplish our proposed solution of converting permanently protected land to diverse habitat for monarch and other native pollinators.
Milestones one through three are complete.
We are allowing a couple sites to go over $700 an acre in the case of prevailing wage contracts and small acreage sites. In those situations, we are still under the NRCS 327 practice standard #22 Monarch Species mix of $1,014 per acre, and under our proposed $1,000 per acre proposal estimate.

Activity 2

With 21 sites remaining, we anticipate enhancing 980 acres, which is nearly 200 acres more than what we anticipated.
To date:

- 5 projects are seeded.
  - Two of them are completed.
  - Three have mowing remaining.
- 20 of the projects have begun. That work includes haying, burning, tree removal, herbicide applications, and tillage. Each to varying degrees based on the project.
- The contractors that were hired for these projects are MN Habitat Management, Native Resource Preservation, Craig Bangasser, Lac qui Parle SWCD, Cole Regnier, Shooting Star Native Seed, Kanati, Canby Volunteer Fire Department, and Haggis
- Individual project updates and pictures can be found in the attachments section.

We anticipate 95% of the projects getting seeded by December 1, 2025. We anticipate each of the sites to be fully complete by June 30, 2026.
Pheasants Forever is hiring the contractor in 5 of the enhancement sites, all procurement policies were followed in selecting the contractor. The landowner chose to complete the work in 16 of the enhancement sites, and referenced the Iowa Custom Farm Rates guide along with comparison to the NRCS 327 Practice Standard #22 Monarch Species Mix for appropriate cost analysis.

Activity 3

From April to May 2025 U of MN selected sites and obtained permits for year two of data collection.
From May to August 2025 U of MN surveyed 13 additional Bee & Beneficial Insect diversity plantings, including 6 Waterfowl Production Areas and 7 privately owned plantings. U of MN surveyed floral resources and percent cover of grass, forbs, and bare ground at each site. U of MN surveyed 413 total transects of 25 quadrats across 3 rounds, spaced 4 weeks apart. All data has been entered and we are beginning the process of cleaning and preparing it for analysis. Cumulatively, 144 species were observed, including 101 native species and 10 noxious weeds (Carduus acanthoides, Centaurea stoebe, Cirsium arvense, Convolvulus arvensis, Coronilla varia, Leucanthemum vulgare, Lotus corniculatus, Pastinaca sativa, and Polygonum spp.). 130,500 total blooms were recorded.

Dissemination

We purchased ENRTF signs and distributed most of them to project managers to then distribute to landowners to post on the project sites. We have not verified that the signs have been installed, but will make that a priority this fall. This summer we have taken more photos, but unfortunately many of them are still stored on the camera or on the computer. We will work on posting those pictures over the next couple of months. All disseminating efforts will utilize the ENRTF logos and requirements.

Status Update Reporting

Status Update April 1, 2025

Date Submitted: March 27, 2025

Date Approved: April 10, 2025

Overall Update

We are on track to meeting the outcomes of this proposal. All sites are chosen for enhancement and U of MN is on track with their monitoring. We have a nice variety of enhancement sites, ranging from sites with moist to wet soil conditions to sites with high and dry and almost gravely soil conditions. Some sites are existing brome grass requiring a full breakout with tillage and herbicide, while some sites are native warm season grass dominated requiring less disturbance to add diversity. Each of the sites will be seeded with an approved seed mix that meets strict 643 MNCREP seeding standards which require:

- Minimum of 40% forb seed per square foot
- Minimum 60% of forbs must be pollinator/monarch preferred
- 1% of total seeds per square foot must be monarch species

Landowners all chose to contribute 10% local match of either cash or in-kind labor to their project. Based on previous experience, landowners who are invested in the project tend to take pride in the project and continue to manage the vegetation beyond the end of the grant. We are excited for summer to see many of these projects get completed. See photo narrative in Tab 7 Attachments.

Activity 1

Our initial RFP process yielded great success, and we selected 22 sites for funding. Over the past year, one landowner withdrew their application due to changes within their personal life. One site is on the verge of cancellation due to staffing turnover and lack of communication but is now limping back to life. In early March, the last site just got contracted. All sites have either started the enhancement work or the contract is in place to complete the project. We do have 5% of the budget left un-allocated. We are leaving a buffer because some of the landowner's cost estimates were low, and we believe they will come back and ask for more funding, which we will allow if costs remain under our $700 per-acre limit. We are allowing a couple sites to go over $700 an acre in the case of prevailing wage contracts and small acreage sites. In those situations, we are still under the NRCS 327 practice standard #22 Monarch Species mix of $1,014 per acre, and under our proposed $1,000 per acre proposal estimate.

Activity 2

With 21 sites remaining, we anticipate enhancing 990 acres, which is 205 acres more than what we anticipated. To date of the 21 projects:

- 3 projects have been seeded.
  - Two of them are completed and closed out.
  - One still has mowing remaining on the project.
- 1 project there has been no enhancement work done yet, but it is contracted and will be starting in 2025.
- 17 of the projects some sort of work has begun. That work includes haying, burning, tree removal, herbicide applications, and tillage. Each to varying degrees based on the project.

We anticipate each of the projects getting seeded by December 1, 2025, with only a handful of projects needed to be mowed in the spring/summer of 2026. We anticipate each of the sites to be fully complete by June 30, 2026.

Pheasants Forever ended up hiring the contractor in 4 of the enhancement sites, all procurement policies were followed in selecting the contractor. The landowner chose to complete the work in 17 of the enhancement sites, and referenced the Iowa Custom Farm Rates guide along with comparison to the NRCS 327 Practice Standard #22 Monarch Species Mix for appropriate cost analysis.

Activity 3

U of MN surveyed 9 Bee and Beneficial Insect plantings from June to August of 2024. We carried out a total of 245 belt transects measuring 2 x 50m across 3 rounds, spaced 3 weeks apart. Within each transect we quantified the area of all floral blooms for all apiphilic flowering species. Data has been entered and cleaned, and we have started preliminary analysis. We found a total of 104 apiphilic plant species blooming within the plantings, including 74 native plants and 6 noxious weeds (Carduus acanthoides, Centaurea stoebe, Cirsium arvense, Coronilla varia, Lotus corniculatus, and Polygonum spp.). 390,000 total blooms were recorded, with up to 31,650 blooms occurring in a single transect. Thank-you letters including an overview of the plants encountered at each site were mailed to participating landowners in January 2025.

Currently we are preparing for the summer 2025 field season. Two summer technicians have been hired, and we are undergoing site selection to continue assessing floral resources at these plantings.

Dissemination

We purchased ENRTF signs and distributed most of them to project managers to then distribute to landowners to post on the project sites. Over the past year, we have not done much for outreach and public recognition because we are in the “ugly” phase of enhancement. The sites are all either disked black, hayed short, burned black, or chemically sprayed dead, and do not make the best photogenic subjects. This summer we plan to take more photos and begin to disseminate the project updates. All disseminating efforts will utilize the ENRTF logos and requirements.

Status Update Reporting

Status Update October 1, 2024

Date Submitted: September 26, 2024

Date Approved: October 1, 2024

Overall Update
This status update is waived per guidance from LCCMR staff provided on August 13, 2024.

Activity 1
This status update is waived per guidance from LCCMR staff provided on August 13, 2024.

Activity 2
This status update is waived per guidance from LCCMR staff provided on August 13, 2024.

Activity 3
This status update is waived per guidance from LCCMR staff provided on August 13, 2024.

Dissemination
This status update is waived per guidance from LCCMR staff provided on August 13, 2024.

Status Update Reporting

Status Update April 1, 2024

Date Submitted: March 26, 2024

Date Approved: April 23, 2024

Overall Update
Our initial outcome of increasing the quality and quantity of diverse native grasslands is ahead of schedule. Our first batching period closed December 15. SWCD and PF staff are working with contractors and landowners to get project bids and to start work as spring conditions allow. All of the funded projects are either monoculture stands of brome grass, or native grass stands of less than five species. We are converting these low diversity stands into areas with greater than 25 native grass and forb species to benefit pollinators, game and non-game species. The state of MN already invested public dollars to protecting these lands for water quality and wildlife habitat. These projects are enhancing that state of MN's initial investment.

Activity 1
Significant work is completed for Activity 1. We worked diligently with BWSR, SWCD's, and USFWS to promote this project and solicit qualified projects. A team of PF biologists developed an application and scoresheet which the applicant filled and by answering site specific questions self-scored themselves 0 to 100 points. The application package was distributed via email, webinar, and in-person presentations. The MN PF website acted as a landing page for Facebook posts and press releases so anyone, general public or agency partner could have access to the same information. Over the 1.5-month application period we received 29 applications ranging in score from 55 to 100. The review committee recommended funding 22 projects, all with a score of 65 and higher. These 22 projects total 964.88 acres, exceeding our 785-acre goal by 179.88 acres. These projects account for 94% of the Professional or Technical Service Contract portion of our budget.

Activity 2
PF and SWCD staff are working with the landowners and contractors to finalize the enhancement process. PF will be hiring the contractor on eight projects while following our procurement policy. The landowner will be doing the work or hiring a contractor for the other 16 projects. All projects will be following BWSR's Native Vegetation Establishment and Enhancement Guidelines. Each project manager developed their own site specific seed mix adapted to the soils and site conditions. We are 179.88 acres beyond our projects goal, and slightly under budget. Leaving some flexibility within the budget will allow us to enhance the seed mixes even more, beyond the minimum 25 species threshold we set in the application phase.

Activity 3
The university of MN is in the process of hiring grad students and research assistants to assess the existing restoration data. The field crew is hired and ready to begin work this summer. PF and U of M are coordinating the future projects that will be part of the new study. To date, no sites have been visited and no data has been collected.

Dissemination
As stated in our dissemination efforts, we worked with SWCD's, USFWS staff to disseminate this projects information to solicit applications. All work included the trust fund logo and credit was given to LCCMR for funding and making these projects viable. We uploaded examples of our dissemination efforts in an attachment in tab 7.