

**Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund
2009 Phase 1 Request for Proposals (RFP)**

LCCMR ID: B14.08

Project Title: HCP - Bluffland Restoration/Set Out Seedlings (2i)

Total Project Budget: \$ \$137,000

Proposed Project Time Period for the Funding Requested: July 2009 - June 2010 (1 yr)

Other Non-State Funds: \$ 18,000

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Region:

Southwest, Southeast

County Name:

Cottonwood, Fillmore, Goodhue,
Houston, Jackson, L

City / Township:

Summary: Restore 200 acres of bluffland habitat by removing red cedar in HCP Area 11. Plant seedlings on 100 acres of public and private land in HCP Area 9.

Main Proposal: 0808-1-002-proposal-2i main proposal.doc

Project Budget: 0808-1-002-budget-2i project budget.xls

Qualifications: 0808-1-002-qualifications-Project Coordinator.doc

MAIN PROPOSAL

**PROJECT TITLE: Mississippi Bluffland Restoration & Set Out Seedlings –
National Wild Turkey Federation**

Minnesota’s Habitat Conservation Partnership Phase VI
www.mnhabitatcorridors.org

I. PROJECT STATEMENT:

The mission of the Habitat Conservation Partnership is to restore, enhance and conserve habitat for the purpose of sustaining fish, wildlife and plant communities for all generations. Minnesota’s Habitat Conservation Partnership (Partnership), formerly the Habitat Corridors Partnership, was formed in 2000 to provide a framework for statewide land conservation in partnership with the Environmental Trust Fund. The work of the Partnership has three main objectives: 1) **Partnership:** working together to accelerate existing programs and identify new opportunities that build upon our existing investments in habitat. 2) **Focus:** The Phase V proposal will work in nine project areas encompassing 27,442 mi². All work proposed will occur within the identified project areas. These areas were identified as focus areas where resource conservation priorities and opportunity overlap 3) **Leverage:** the objective of this partnership is to bring more resources to bear on Minnesota’s conservation need by identifying non-state contributions to accelerate habitat conservation by maximizing the results from limited funding through the Environmental Trust Fund.

This project provides focus and partnership by complimenting the existing Landowner Incentive Program (LIP) Blufflands Landscape project. LIP assists eligible, private landowners, who wish to voluntarily manage their land to benefit listed species (identified in the State Wildlife Action Plan), with the development of habitat management plans and financial assistance for habitat enhancement and restoration. The project will focus on the population sustainability of the timber rattlesnake (*C. horridus*), three other at-risk snake species (racer, bullsnake, and hognose snake) and other numerous at-risk plant species in the Bluffland subsection of southeastern MN.

The Set Out Seedlings project focuses on HCP Area 9 and partners with local NWTF chapters and landowners. It also leverages dollars spent by NWTF on its 3-state Set Out Seedlings is a national NWTF program designed to restore wild turkey habitat throughout its range by planting native trees in suitable areas.

II. DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT RESULTS

Result 1: Bluffland Restoration

Budget: \$ 110,000

This project will implement habitat restoration activities that reduce the amount of canopy cover to 30% or less around the den sites by controlling invasive plant species such as Eastern red cedar, buckthorn, honeysuckle, and prickly ash. A multiple treatment approach will be utilized that includes hand cutting of red cedars and invasive brush species, prescribed burns, and exotic species control. During this grant period, approximately 200 acres of Timber rattlesnake habitat on public lands will be enhanced utilizing grant monies. There is very little ground layer vegetation under dense stands of red cedar. Restoring the goat prairie vegetation will also reduce soil loss and improve water quality within the watershed. The timber rattlesnake is a species of concern identified in the state Wildlife Action Plan, and the blufflands have been identified in the North American Wild Turkey Management Plan as both a Habitat Focus Area and a Land Protection Area.

Deliverable

Completion Date

1. Remove red cedar and other invasive species on
200 acres of bluffland habitat

June 30, 2010

Result 1: Set Out Seedlings**Budget: \$27,000**

NWTF will plant shrubs and seedlings on public and private land. Local Chapters will order the trees through various nurseries and coordinate the planting in their respective areas. Labor to plant the trees and shrubs will be donated by local volunteers. An estimated 50,000 trees and shrubs will be planted in riparian areas within HCP Area 9. At 500 trees per acre on average approximately 100 acres will be planted. The riparian areas in SW Minnesota have been identified in the North American Wild Turkey Management Plan as a Habitat Focus Area. Tree and shrub plantings along stream corridors will reduce soil loss and improve water quality.

Deliverable**Completion Date****1. Plant seedlings and direct seed up to 100 acres****June 30, 2010****III. PROJECT STRATEGY AND TIMELINE****A. Project Partners**

This proposal is part of the Habitat Conservation Partnership Phase VI Proposal. Please see the main proposal for a complete list of partners involved. In addition to the partners listed therein, we plan to work with Jaime Edwards, DNR Non-game Biologist, to partner with the LIP program for the restoration of bluffland habitat

- B. Project Impact** Restoring cliff and bluffland habitats will positively impact habitat for the state listed timber rattlesnake. Maintaining viable populations of the species in the wild allows in-situ scientific research and enhances our knowledge of the contributions the animal makes to the bluff prairie– forest ecosystems. This proposal is of great regional significance and has the potential for replication throughout the bluffslands region.

The tree planting portion of this project will provide a demonstrated measurable outcome of planting a minimum of 100 acres of native tree and shrub seedlings. This project will also have statewide applicability and the natural food source will ensure a long-term beneficial impact to wildlife.

- C. Time:** We propose a twelve month grant beginning July 1, 2009 and ending on June 30, 2010.

- D. Long-Term Strategy:** This unique Partnership exists as a result of the desire of LCCMR to encourage conservation partners to work together as a statewide collaboration to focus resources and bring additional funds to Minnesota’s wildlife habitat resources. We are 18 formal partner agencies and organizations recognized for an ability to achieve the mission of restoring, enhancing and conserving habitat for the purpose of sustaining fish, wildlife and native plant communities for all generations. Bluffland restoration is a long-term effort by DNR, NWTF and private landowners in SE MN. Several grants and outreach programs have been and continue to be used to restore this rare and valuable habitat. Planting seedlings and direct seeding trees and shrubs in riparian areas is a long-term effort of NWTF in Minnesota. While we recognize that parts of the state were originally in prairies, the areas along rivers typically were spared by wildfires due to the topography and moisture conditions which allowed trees to flourish. Wooded corridors are important to wild turkeys and other wildlife as travel lanes, roosting and feeding areas. Additional benefits are realized where woodlots are connected that would otherwise be isolated patches. The NWTF Set Out Seedlings program, in concert with other grants and projects will continue this effort into the future.

Project Budget

National Wild Turkey Federation - Set Out Seedlings & Mississippi Blufflands Restoration

IV. TOTAL PROJECT REQUEST BUDGET

<u>BUDGET ITEM</u>	<u>AMOUNT</u>	<u>% FTE</u>
Personnel:		
NWTF Regional Biologist - salary and travel expenses for both projects.	\$ 12,000	10%
Restoration: 200 acres Bluffland restoration, 100 acres Set Out Seedlings.	\$ 125,000	
TOTAL PROJECT BUDGET REQUEST TO LCCMR	\$ 137,000	

V. OTHER FUNDS

<u>SOURCE OF FUNDS</u>	<u>AMOUNT</u>	<u>Status</u>
Remaining \$ From Previous Trust Fund Appropriation (if applicable): Phase IV - Land Acquisition = \$15,000, Phase V - Bluffland Restoration = \$70,000, and Phase V SOS = \$15,000. Land acquisition funds will be spent in partnership with Pheasants Forever, Bluffland restoration field season begins in winter 2008, and the \$15,000 for seedlings has been obligated through orders placed with nurseries.	\$ 100,000	
Other Non-State \$ Being Leveraged During Project Period: Phase IV - Land Acquisition = unknown (pending approval), and Phase V - Set Out Seedlings = ~ 18,000 (secured)	\$~18000	<i>NWTF has committed \$18,000 to be expended through Phases IV (2007) & V (2008) by 07/01/09</i>
Other State \$ Being Spent During Project Period: Phase IV - Land Acquisition = unknown (pending approval), Phase V - Bluffland Restoration = \$55,000 (secured)	\$ 55,000	<i>Describe any known projects with non ETF State funds</i>
In-kind Services During Project Period: <i>What in-kind services will be provided during the funding period? List type of service(s) and estimated value. In-kind services listed should be specific to the project.</i>	\$ -	
Past Spending: <i>List money spent or to be spent on this specific project, cash and/or in-kind, for 2-year timeframe prior to July 1, 2009</i>	\$ -	Phase IV & V

Project Coordinator – Dave Neu – Mr. Neu graduated with B.S. in Biology and Wildlife Management from UWSP in 1984. During 1987 through 2000, Mr. Neu has worked as a Fisheries Technician, Wildlife Technician, and Senior Wildlife Biologist for the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. Currently he is serving as the NWTF Senior Regional Wildlife Biologist for WI, MN Upper Michigan and Manitoba. He is a Certified Wildlife Biologist as recognized by The Wildlife Society.

About the NWTF

The NWTF is a grassroots, nonprofit organization with more than 500,000 members in 50 states, Canada, Mexico and 14 other foreign countries. It supports scientific wildlife management on public, private and corporate lands as well as wild turkey hunting as a traditional North American sport.

In 1973, the National Wild Turkey Federation was founded in Fredericksburg, Va. At that time, there were an estimated 1.3 million wild turkeys and 1.5 million turkey hunters. Shortly after its founding, the NWTF moved to Edgefield, S.C., where it is headquartered today.

Thanks to the work of federal, state and provincial wildlife agencies and the NWTF's many volunteers and partners, there are now more than 7 million wild turkeys and nearly 3 million turkey hunters. Turkey hunting has become the fastest growing form of hunting and has the second-highest number of participants of any type of hunting.

Since 1985, more than \$279 million NWTF and cooperator dollars have been spent on upholding hunting traditions and conserving more than 13.9 million acres of wildlife habitat. Hunters have also benefited as the NWTF has worked tirelessly to support our hunting heritage and protect and promote laws that increase hunting opportunity and safety.