

**Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund
2010 Request for Proposals (RFP)**

LCCMR ID: 143-E2

Project Title:

The Minnesota Breeding Bird Atlas

LCCMR 2010 Funding Priority:

E. Natural Resource Conservation Planning and Implementation

Total Project Budget: \$ \$372,856

Proposed Project Time Period for the Funding Requested: 2 years, 2010 - 2012

Other Non-State Funds: \$ \$70,000

Summary:

Years three and four of a six-year, statewide, volunteer-conducted survey of all breeding birds in Minnesota, resulting in the first comprehensive data identifying species ranges and concentrations.

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Sponsoring Organization: Audubon Minnesota

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Location:

Region: Statewide

County Name: Statewide

City / Township:

_____ Knowledge Base	_____ Broad App.	_____ Innovation
_____ Leverage	_____ Outcomes	
_____ Partnerships	_____ Urgency	_____ TOTAL

PROJECT TITLE: The Minnesota Breeding Bird Atlas

I. PROJECT STATEMENT

The Minnesota Breeding Bird Atlas, which is anticipated to be a 6-year project, began in July 2008 with 2 years of funding from LCCMR. We are submitting a 2-year request for funding of years 3-4 of the project focusing on gathering field data. The final product of the Minnesota Breeding Bird Atlas will be a comprehensive, statewide survey of the breeding distribution of all species of birds in Minnesota. At the end of the six-year effort we will publish a book and have an interactive on-line version, both with detailed distribution maps, data on breeding status, and a summary of data from other surveys. Access to the information will be provided to the public as well as conservation agencies and organizations. This will be the most extensive survey of the state's breeding birds ever attempted.

Breeding Bird Atlases are used throughout the world to document and map the distribution of breeding birds. Minnesota is one of only six states that does not have an atlas, consequently impeding state and regional bird conservation efforts. The atlas is consistent with many aspects of the LCCMR State Conservation and Preservation Plan and its greatest value will be its contribution to wildlife conservation by identifying areas of high bird diversity, density, and concentration for particular species of concern. It can thus guide habitat protection, restoration, and management efforts by providing essential distribution information for many species and areas for which we have little data.

The project is housed at, and day-to-day operations overseen by, Audubon Minnesota, with strategic and technical guidance from numerous project partners. The NRRI at U of MN-Duluth is overseeing statewide point count and habitat data collection. Utilizing an anticipated 1,500 volunteers to collect data on the distribution and abundance of birds, the BBA will directly engage Minnesota's citizens with bird conservation and our natural resources. As sentinels for Minnesota's environmental quality, the state's breeding birds are a window into our goal to provide sustainable resources for future generations. The atlas will be an invaluable tool in helping us monitor our ability to achieve that goal.

II. DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT RESULTS

Result 1: Volunteer and Staff Training and Management *Budget:* \$ 72,576

1) **Recruit and train project staff, volunteer coordinators and surveyors** - The project will continue to employ a full-time, paid coordinator. Twelve paid seasonal field surveyors will conduct specialized counts and work in remote and hard-to-access areas. Most data will be collected by volunteers working around the state and overseen by 31 volunteer regional coordinators. These volunteers and coordinators will be recruited statewide, and provided with ongoing training and support.

2) **Maintain partnership steering and technical committees** – The project will require multi-year coordination among partners, volunteers and technical experts who provide overall project coordination and oversee quality and data management.

Deliverables

1. Recruit and train project staff, volunteer coordinators and surveyors
2. Produce survey materials

Completion Date

July 2013
July 2013

Result 2: Data Collection **Budget:** \$ 264,571

1) By the end of year 4 one "priority block" (the northeast 3 x 3 mile quadrant) in 80% of Minnesota's approximately 2,250 townships will be surveyed during the breeding period.

2) By the end of year 4 80% of the point counts conducted by specially trained seasonal staff will be completed. This will provide systematic distribution and abundance data on bird species across the entire state.

3) By the end of year 4, 75% of the estimated 43 townships in the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness and 78 townships in the remote peat lands of Koochiching, Beltrami, and St. Louis Counties will need to be surveyed by paid staff and accessed by canoe or helicopter.

The Minnesota Breeding Bird Atlas

Deliverable	Completion Date
1. Data on breeding birds for approximately 80 % of Minnesota townships will be systematically gathered.	<i>July 2013</i>
2 Data on breeding bird in 75% of the townships in remote areas will be gathered.	<i>July 2013</i>

Result 3: Data Management and Analysis Budget: \$35,708

- 1) A website with information about the atlas and providing volunteers with survey protocols, identification aids, and updated results and maps will be maintained and improved as necessary.
- 2) A system for management and storage of data; on-line data entry, quality control, and editing will continue to be operational. This system will house the data during the course of the project. We will have the ability to print aerial photos and topographic maps of survey sites and view BBA results by species or geographic region. Data will be usable as a geographic information system (GIS) layer.

Deliverable	Completion Date
1. A data access and informational website	<i>July 2013</i>
2. A web-based data entry, management, and reporting system	<i>July 2013</i>

III. PROJECT STRATEGY

A. Project Team/Partners

Audubon Minnesota – Mark Martell, Project Manager, Bonnie Sample, Program Coordinator, oversee data management and collection

Natural Resources Research Institute – Univ. of MN Duluth – Gerald J. Niemi, Professor, will lead the efforts for the systematic surveys across the state of Minnesota in each township and within the inaccessible areas of northern Minnesota counties. He has over 35 years of experience designing and implementing field projects on birds throughout Minnesota.

Bell Museum of Natural History - Dr. Scott Lanyon, is Chair of the Steering Committee

Minnesota DNR Division of Ecological Resources – Provide funding and staff time on oversight and technical matters

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service – Provide funding and staff time on oversight and technical matters

Minnesota Ornithologists' Union - Provide funding and volunteer time on oversight and technical matters

B. Timeline Requirements

2006 - Planning for the BBA began; 2007 – Operational blueprint completed;

2008 (July) – 2010 (June) - First 2 years of funding from LCCMR and project partners resulted in staff and volunteer engagement and field data collection

2010 (July – Aug) Completion of seasonal data collection, (Sept – Jan) Volunteer recruitment and training

2011 (Feb – Aug) Seasonal data collection, (Sept – Jan) Volunteer recruitment and training

2012 (Feb – June) Seasonal data collection

C. Long-Term Strategy

The Minnesota Breeding Bird Atlas will provide the first time-specific survey of all the breeding birds in the state. This information will be available to land and resource managers, the public, and policy makers providing an invaluable resource as future events such as global warming require a response. Information can continue to be collected by partners and others providing a unique and robust view of Minnesota's birds.

Project Budget

The Minnesota Breeding Bird Atlas

IV. TOTAL PROJECT REQUEST BUDGET 2 years)

BUDGET ITEM <i>(See list of Eligible & Non-Eligible Costs, p. 13)</i>	AMOUNT
Personnel:	
Program Coordinator: 100% full-time employment 24 months, 32% fringe rate	\$117,300
Project Manager: 16% of full-time employment for 24 months, 32% fringe rate	\$23,000
Administrative Support: 8% of full-time employment for 24 months, 32% fringe rate	\$8,782
Research Assistants: 10 seasonal staff 4 - 7 wks each year, 8.2% fringe	\$73,694
Contracts:	
Website Maintenance:	\$4,000
Data Management System: Cornell University	\$5,000
Helicopter Services for access to remote sites	\$40,000
BWCAW outfitting for access to sites	\$6,000
Printing and Graphics	\$1,500
Workshops/Meetings	\$5,000
Equipment/Tools/Supplies:	
Office Supplies and Mailings	\$2,500
Field Supplies (GPS units, maps, etc)	\$2,800
Acquisition (Fee Title or Permanent Easements): NA	
Travel:	
Project Coordinator Travel	\$7,000
Field Research Assistant Travel	\$41,280
Volunteer Travel	\$35,000
Additional Budget Items:	
TOTAL PROJECT BUDGET REQUEST TO LCCMR	\$372,856

V. OTHER FUNDS

SOURCE OF FUNDS:	AMOUNT	Status
Other Non-State \$ Being Applied to Project During Project Period: Project Partners - Audubon Minnesota, Minnesota Ornithologist's Union, U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service	\$70,000	Pending
Other State \$ Being Applied to Project During Project Period: MN DNR Div. of Ecological Services	\$40,000	Pending
In-kind Services During Project Period: Volunteer Time (400 vols @ 25 hrs per year for 2 yrs @ \$17.50/yr)	\$350,000	pending
Funding History: LCCMR (\$270,000), Audubon (\$30,000), USFWS (\$50,000), Minnesota Ornithologists Union (\$20,000), MN DNR (\$40,000)	\$410,000	

Audubon Minnesota: Organizational Description

Audubon Minnesota is the state office of the National Audubon Society. Established in 1979, we share Audubon's 104-year heritage of working to protect our environment. While we are part of the national organization, we establish our own statewide programs and pursue our own funding for Minnesota efforts. The Audubon Minnesota mission is to conserve and restore Minnesota's natural ecosystems, focusing on birds and their habitats, for the benefit of humanity and the earth's biological diversity. Today there are nearly 17,000 Audubon members in Minnesota, organized into 14 geographically-based chapters from Agassiz Audubon Chapter in Thief River Falls to the Coulee Region Audubon Chapter in La Crescent.

Project Manager – Mark Martell, Director of Bird Conservation – Audubon Minnesota. Mark has an M.S. in Wildlife Conservation from the University of Minnesota. He has worked in bird conservation in Minnesota for over 25 at Audubon Minnesota and the Raptor Center at the University of Minnesota. Mark has been project manager on previous LCMR grants most recently the 2007 Breeding Bird Atlas and the 2005 Birding Trails project that produced 3 birding trail guide books for Minnesota. As project director Mark will be responsible for budget and project oversight, ensure full partner participation, and be the direct supervisor of the project coordinator.

