

**Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund  
2011-2012 Request for Proposals (RFP)**

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**LCCMR ID: 104-D-3.1**

**Project Title:** 3.1 - MeCC 6 - TPL's Critical Land Protection Program

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**Category:** D. Land Acquisition for Habitat and Recreation

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**Total Project Budget:** \$ \$1,000,000

**Proposed Project Time Period for the Funding Requested:** 2 yrs, July 2011 - June 2013

**Other Non-State Funds:** \$ 0

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**Summary:**

Strategic acquisition of an estimated 61 acres of high quality habitat including 0.6 miles of shoreline- all within scientifically determined wildlife corridors within the greater Twin Cities Metropolitan Area

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**Sponsoring Organization:** The Trust for Public Land

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**Location**

**Region:** Metro

**Ecological Section:** Minnesota and NE Iowa Morainal (222M)

**County Name:** Anoka, Carver, Chisago, Dakota, Goodhue, Hennepin, Isanti, Le Sueur, Nicollet, Ramsey, Rice, Scott, Sherburne, Sibley, Washington, Wright

**City / Township:**

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_____ Funding Priorities	_____ Multiple Benefits	_____ Outcomes	_____ Knowledge Base
_____ Extent of Impact	_____ Innovation	_____ Scientific/Tech Basis	_____ Urgency
_____ Capacity Readiness	_____ Leverage	_____ Employment	_____ TOTAL _____%

# 2011-2012 MAIN PROPOSAL

**PROJECT TITLE:** TPL's Critical Land Protection Program- MeCC VI 2011

## I. PROJECT STATEMENT

The proposed project includes strategic acquisition of an estimated 61 acres of high quality habitat and approximately 0.6 miles of shoreline in scientifically evaluated wildlife corridors within the greater Twin Cities Metropolitan Area. ENRTF dollars will leverage additional funds to approximately double the acres and miles protected with ENRTF dollars alone. An estimated 255,000 acres of high quality natural lands (MNDNR 2003) remain in the seven county metro area and only 32% is currently protected by DNR, US Fish and Wildlife Service, or as regional parks or nature preserves.

The goal of this effort is to protect portions of the remaining high quality land and water habitat that can provide as many benefits as possible. Benefits include: resilience of animal and plant populations (including "Species in Greatest Conservation Need") to climate change by focusing work within migration/connectivity corridors; protection of our lakes, rivers, streams and the quality of our ground water; and access for "close to home" outdoor recreation, study, and quiet enjoyment where nearly 60% of the state's population lives. Land acquisitions also contribute to the state and region's economic vitality by injecting cash into the marketplace, by triggering deed tax revenues to the state, by attracting additional funds from non-state sources, and by providing jobs to the professionals involved in the process including environmental consultants, closers and title insurers, surveyors, appraisers, etc. All lands acquired will be priorities as demonstrated through adopted state, regional, or local natural resource plans.

The economic recession has provided some once-in-a-lifetime unique opportunities: landowners previously not interested in selling are now motivated and land prices have fallen so that properties are now available at a fraction of the price in other times. This effort aims to focus on those unique opportunities as well as to continue building on past work accomplished through previous years ENRTF funding.

## II. DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT ACTIVITIES

**Activity 1:** Strategic acquisition of fee title lands in the greater Twin Cities Metro Area     **Budget:** \$ 1,000,000

Acquire land in fee title and convey it into public ownership for stewardship and protection. Following is a list of the lands that may be acquired in part with funding from this request. TPL will work with the long-term steward to ensure a restoration and management plan is developed and that funding is identified for long-term stewardship.

### ***Unique/Once-in-a-lifetime Opportunities***

Savage Fen SNA additions: A significant amount of land has become available for acquisition and at possibly half of its pre-economic downturn value. Acquired land would provide protection to existing Scientific and Natural Area lands as well as to currently unprotected sugar maple-basswood forests, seepage meadow, fen, and alkaline seeps and spring—all within the Minnesota River Valley. Acquisition will also entail provision of a multi-use trail through an existing disturbed corridor. Signage will be placed along corridor to educate the public about the unique landforms found here and about the cultural history of the area. Protection is supported through local and regional plans.

Lindstrom Natural Area: In southern Chisago County, TPL is working with the City of Lindstrom and multiple landowners to protect lakeshore and high quality forested lands designated by the DNR as "regionally significant ecological areas." This is the second and last phase of an effort that has been

made possible by the down economy and which includes protection of 5,497 feet of lakeshore and habitat for species in greatest need of conservation such as red shouldered hawk, bald eagle, and Blanding’s turtles. Protection is supported in local, regional, and state plans.

Rum River-Boy Scouts: In west-central Anoka County, TPL is working with the landowners and the City of Ramsey to protect a 160+ acre patch of regionally significant ecological lands including river shoreline, wetlands, forests and prairie habitat. Acquisition would provide protection of these resources as well as access to the Wild and Scenic Rum River, which is also a state designated canoe route.

***Building on Past Accomplishments***

St. Croix Valley (Franconia- Scandia SNA): TPL is building on its past successful acquisitions with the DNR’s Scientific and Natural Areas Program to protect more critical habitat in this important ecological corridor as defined by DNR’s Division of Ecological Services. Acquisitions will be targeted toward lands of high biodiversity significance and to sensitive ravines that impact the water quality leading into the St. Croix National Scenic Riverway. Protection here is supported by local, state, and federal plans.

Pike Lake II: Building on its past successful acquisition of 30 acres for a natural area, TPL is again working with the City of Prior Lake to acquire land to extend this habitat corridor along the shoreline of pristine Pike Lake. Acquisition of this land is critical for protecting wildlife (including nesting bald eagles), for protecting water quality, and for providing the public an opportunity to enjoy nature nearby in this rapidly growing area of the metro.

Outcome	Completion Date
1. Approx. 61 acres of high quality habitat and 0.6 miles of shoreline protected through fee title acquisition	6/30/2013

**III. PROJECT STRATEGY**

**A. Project Team/Partners**

This proposal is part of the Metro Conservation Corridors Partnership, which is an effort among 10 non-profit conservation organizations and public agencies to target limited resources to shared priorities (i.e. within scientifically determined conservation corridors) within the metro area. Further, the Partnership aims to coordinate on provision of a full range of conservation tools and expertise where needed, including fee acquisition, easement acquisition, and restoration & enhancement activities.

In addition to partnering with the core Metro Conservation Corridor organizations, TPL will partner with towns, townships, SWCDs, Watershed Districts, lakeshore associations, citizen groups etc. in order to accomplish the outcomes stated above. TPL will work closely with the private landowner and public agency to which TPL will transfer the land and which will serve as the long-term steward of the land TPL purchases using ENRTF funds. When TPL transfers interests in land to a long-term steward, TPL will donate to the land steward the land value of the ENRTF funds.

**B. Timeline Requirements**

2 Years, until June 30, 2013.

**C. Long-Term Strategy and Future Funding Needs**

This proposal is a component of a larger and longer-term effort of the Metro Conservation Corridors Partnership, begun in 2003, to accelerate the protection and restoration of critical habitat in the broader Twin Cities Metropolitan Area, a 16-county area that is expanding with the result of land and water habitat fragmentation, degradation, loss and and permanent conversion to urban uses. MeCC will continue its work as long as critical habitat that needs to be protected remains unprotected and in danger of degradation and loss.

## 2011-2012 Detailed Project Budget

### IV. TOTAL TRUST FUND REQUEST BUDGET two years

<u>BUDGET ITEM</u>	<u>AMOUNT</u>
<b>Acquisition (Fee Title or Permanent Easements):</b> Funds will be used to purchase approximately 61 acres of high quality habitat and 0.6 miles of shoreline in fee title in the greater Twin Cities Metro Area. The land will be transferred to a local, state, or federal agency for permanent stewardship. Please see attached land acquisition list for more details	\$ 1,000,000
<b>TOTAL ENVIRONMENT &amp; NATURAL RESOURCES TRUST FUND \$ REQUEST</b>	<b>\$ 1,000,000</b>

### V. OTHER FUNDS

<u>SOURCE OF FUNDS</u>	<u>AMOUNT</u>	<u>Status</u>
<b>Other Non-State \$ Being Applied to Project During Project Period:</b> Various local, federal, and private funds	\$ 500,000	<i>Pending</i>
<b>Other State \$ Being Applied to Project During Project Period:</b> Various bonding, and/or Clean Water, Land, and Legacy funds	\$ 500,000	<i>Pending</i>
<b>Remaining \$ from Current ENRTF Appropriation (if applicable):</b>		
<b>2009 Metro Conservation Corridors (\$380,000 appropriated)</b>	\$ 318,000	<i>Spent</i>
	\$ 62,000	<i>Committed</i>
<b>2010 Metro Conservation Corridors (\$915,000 recommended by LCCMR)</b>	\$ 915,000	<i>Recommended by LCCMR</i>
<b>Funding History:</b>		
2005: \$620,000 ETF + \$1,361,560 other funds	\$ 1,981,560	<i>Spent</i>
2007: \$420,000 ETF + \$1,492,440 other funds	\$ 1,912,440	<i>Spent</i>
2008: \$475,000 ETF + \$1,725,000 other funds	\$ 2,200,000	<i>Spent</i>
2009: \$380,000 ETF + \$360,000 other funds		<i>See above</i>

## 2011-2012 Acquisition List for Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund Proposal

**Project Title:** TPL's Critical Lands Protection Program

**Project Manager Name:** Becca Nash

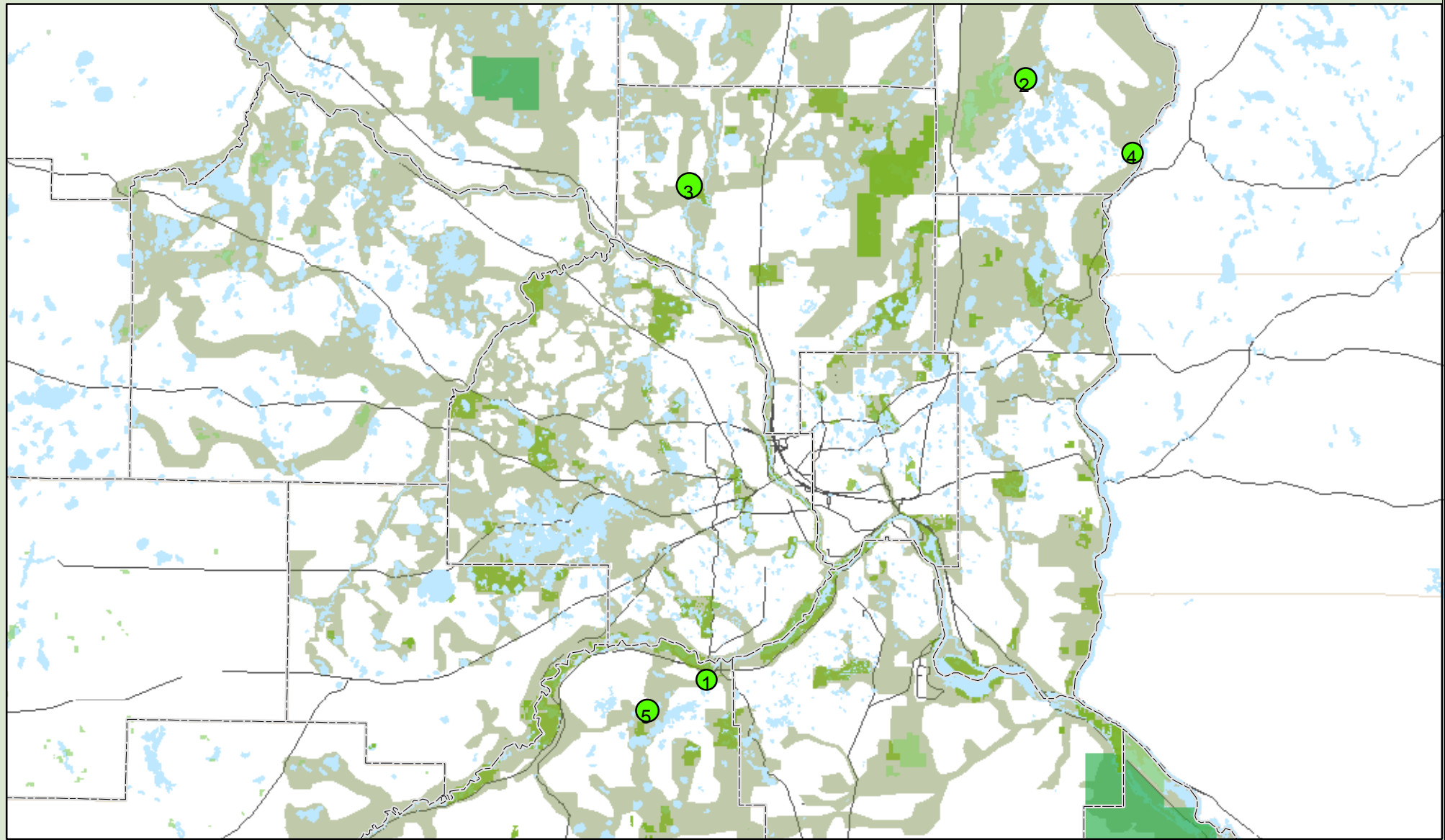
**Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund \$ Request:** \$1,000,000

**Final Title Holder(s):** Various, including SNA, City of Lindstrom, City of Ramsey, National Park Service, and the City of Prior Lake

#	Parcel Name	Acquisition Type (Fee-Title OR Conservation Easement)	County	Estimated # of Acres	Geographical Coordinates (Provide Latitude/Longitude OR UTM-X/UTM-Y)			
					Latitude	Longitude	UTM-X	UTM-Y
1	Savage Fen SNA additions	Fee title	Scott	7.5	44 46'2 N	93 22'6. W		
2	Lindstrom Natural Area	Fee title	Chisago	10	45 24'10. N	92 49'56.W		
3	Rum River-Boy Scouts	Fee title	Anoka	16	45 17'24. N	93 22'30.W		
4	Franconia-Scandia SNA	Fee title	Chisago	15	45 20'14. N	92 42'36.W		
5	Pike Lake II	Fee title	Scott	12.5	44 45'9. N	93 25'51.W		
	Estimated Total			61				

**NOTES:**

Parcel Name	Final title holder
Savage Fen SNA additions	DNR- SNA
Lindstrom Natural Area	City of Lindstrom
Rum River-Boy Scouts	City of Ramsey
Franconia-Scandia SNA	DNR- SNA
Pike Lake II	City of Prior Lake



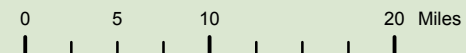
## TPL's Critical Land Protection Program- MeCC VI 2011 Focus Areas

### Legend

- County Boundary
- Metro\_Parks
- Wildlife Management Areas
- Scientific and Natural Areas
- NWR\_NFWS
- Metro Conservation Corridors

- (1) Savage Fen SNA Additions
- (2) Lindstrom Natural Area
- (3) Rum River- Boy Scouts
- (4) Franconia Scandia SNA
- (5) Pike Lake II

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**Becca Nash**

Becca Nash, Project Manager with The Trust for Public Land, leads conservation real estate and conservation finance work throughout the state of Minnesota. She manages all aspects of real estate transactions including initial research and outreach; negotiating contracts; advocating for and securing financing; and coordinating due diligence work. Prior to her work at TPL, Becca coordinated studies funded by the EPA for the University of Minnesota School of Public Health. She has a B.S. in biology from the University of Minnesota College of Biological Sciences.

