

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

LCCMR ID: 104-D

Project Title: MeCC 6 - Overall Metropolitan Conservation Corridors (MeCC) Summary

Category: D. Land Acquisition for Habitat and Recreation

Total Project Budget: \$ \$7,035,600

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

Other Non-State Funds: \$ 2,598,000

Summary:

Protect and restore a connected network of critical habitat in the greater metropolitan area by acquiring fee title and conservation easements on 1,695 acres and restoring and enhancing 905 acres.

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Sponsoring Organization: Minnesota Land Trust

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Location

Region: Metro

Ecological Section: Paleozoic Plateau (222L), 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:

_____ 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: Metropolitan Conservation Corridors (MeCC) Phase VI Overall Summary

I. PROJECT STATEMENT

The Metro Conservation Corridors (MeCC) Partnership accelerates protection and restoration of remaining high-quality natural lands in the greater Twin Cities metropolitan area by strategically coordinating and focusing conservation efforts within a connected network of critical lands. This corridor network stretches from the area's urban core to its rural perimeter, including portions of 16 counties.

Our projects and activities take place within science-based corridors and are guided by the Minnesota Statewide Conservation and Preservation Plan, Minnesota's Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy, as well as numerous local and resource-specific plans. This project addresses several recommendations of the Statewide Conservation and Preservation Plan:

- Protect priority land habitats
- Protect critical shorelands of streams and lakes
- Restore land, wetlands, and wetland-associated watersheds
- Improve connectivity and access to outdoor recreation

Specifically, during this sixth phase of the MeCC Partnership, our focus will be on projects that build upon prior investments to enlarge habitat areas and create connections as well as projects that capitalize on urgent and unique opportunities. Our goal is to permanently protect 1,695 acres through fee title and conservation easement acquisition and to restore and/or enhance 905 acres of habitat. By achieving our goals, we expect the following outcomes:

- Strengthen and protect biodiversity in the region
- Protect and improve water quality of our region's lakes, rivers, and streams
- Protect and enhance habitat for a vast variety of wildlife and rare plant species, including "species in greatest conservation need"

The MeCC Partnership maximizes dollars available for conservation by building upon past efforts and investments, leveraging other private and public resources, and engaging in strategic cooperation. The Partnership has an excellent track record. Since 2003, Metro Corridors partners have protected more than 6,100 acres and restored more than 5,300 acres of priority lands in the greater Twin Cities metro area.

II. DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT ACTIVITIES

Activity 1: Partnership Coordination, Mapping, and Database Management **Budget:** \$50,000

The Minnesota Land Trust will provide coordination and leadership by convening and facilitating meetings, providing support to partners, compiling overall reports and accomplishments, and guiding strategic outreach and implementation efforts. DNR Management Information Services (MIS) staff will provide management of and updates to the GIS-based database developed to track MeCC projects as well as mapping needs of the partnership.

Outcome	Completion Date
1. Convene and facilitate quarterly meetings of the partnership to share information and coordinate work (MLT)	June 30, 2013
2. Compile and submit overall partnership reports twice yearly (MLT)	June 30, 2013
3. Conduct outreach to local communities and landowners with number of	June 30, 2013

activities and target audiences to be determined through MeCC evaluation	
4. Maintain current records of accomplishments in the database (DNR)	June 30, 2013

Activity 2: Restore and Enhance Significant Habitat Budget: \$1,052,300

Restoration and enhancement of critical prairie, forest, and other habitats or major landscape connections. All projects will be within scientifically determined corridors in the greater metropolitan area and strategically focused to build upon prior investments or take advantage of unique and urgent opportunities. See individual proposals for additional details.

Outcome	Completion Date
1. Restore and/or enhance 905 acres of critical habitat	June 30, 2013

Activity 3: Acquire Significant Habitat Budget: \$5,400,000

Acquisition of fee title or conservation easements to protect critical habitats or major landscape connections within scientifically determined corridors in the greater metropolitan area. Projects will be strategically focused to build upon prior investments or take advantage of unique urgent opportunities. See individual proposals for additional details.

Outcome	Completion Date
1. Protect 341 acres of critical habitat through fee title acquisition	June 30, 2013
2. Protect 1,354 acres through conservation easements	June 30, 2013

III. PROJECT STRATEGY

A. Project Team/Partners

Trust for Public Land	Critical Land Protection Program - Acquisition
MN Land Trust	Protect Significant Habitat by Acquiring Conservation Easements
Friends of the Mississippi River	Restore & Enhance Significant Watershed Habitat
MN Valley Nat. Wildlife Refuge Trust	Priority Expansion & Restoration of MN Valley NW Refuge
Great River Greening	Restoring our Lands and Waters
DNR Fish and Wildlife	DNR Aquatic Management Area Acquisition
Dakota County	Lakeshore & Riparian Protection & Restoration
DNR Management Information Serv.	Partnership Mapping and Database
DNR Community Conservation Assist.	Not part of this funding request
DNR SNA Program	Not part of this funding request
Friends of the Minnesota Valley	No current request

B. Timeline Requirements

This project is proposed as two-years of the ongoing Metro Conservation Corridors program. We anticipate work being completed between July 1, 2011 and June 30, 2013.

C. Long-Term Strategy and Future Funding Needs

This project advances the long-term strategy of the Metro Conservation Corridors, initiated in partnership with the LCCMR in 2003 to accelerate the protection and restoration of critical habitat in the greater Twin Cities metropolitan area. Progress towards this long-term strategy is ongoing, and MeCC will continue its work as long as urbanization and fragmentation continue to threaten critical habitat. Additionally, the MeCC Partnership currently is conducting an evaluation to review past accomplishments, highlight strengths and weaknesses of the Partnership, and provide ideas for future focus and strategy. We anticipate completing this project this summer, and results will be incorporated into MeCC's future conservation work.

2011-2012 Detailed Project Budget

MeCC Overall Budget

IV. TOTAL TRUST FUND REQUEST BUDGET 2 years

<u>BUDGET ITEM</u>	<u>AMOUNT</u>
Personnel: Staff to manage and coordinate MeCC and manage mapping and database for 2 years. Other partner conservation staff salary and related benefits - please see Overall Table B and individual budgets for additional detail.	\$ 611,410
Contracts: Restoration, GIS, Professional Services - please see Overall Table B individual budgets for additional detail.	\$ 435,400
Equipment/Tools/Supplies: Restoration plant materials and supplies. Please see Overall Table B and individual budgets for additional detail.	\$ 32,640
Acquisition (Fee Title or Permanent Easements): Funds to purchase fee title and conservation easements and related transaction expenses. Please see Overall Table B and individual budgets for additional detail.	\$ 5,497,600
Restoration: Restoration supplies and vendors. Please see Overall Table B and individual budgets for additional detail.	\$ 277,250
Travel: Mileage and related travel expenses in Minnesota.	\$ 11,300
Additional Budget Items: Easement stewardship, signs, parking to ensure sites meet DNR minimum maintenance standards, volunteer event supplies. Please see Overall Table B and individual budgets for additional detail.	\$ 170,500
TOTAL ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES TRUST FUND \$ REQUEST	\$ 7,036,100

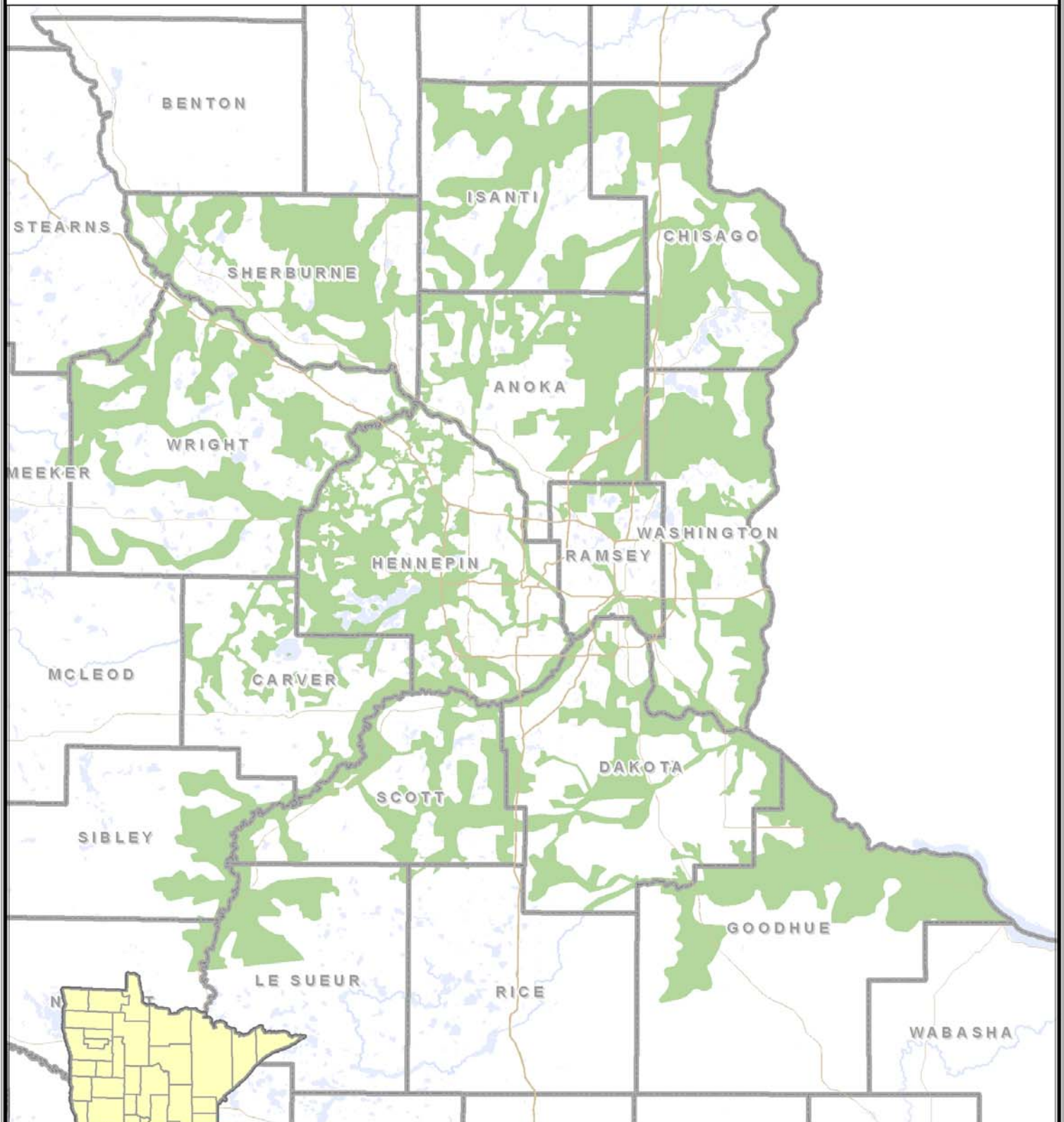
V. OTHER FUNDS





<u>SOURCE OF FUNDS</u>	<u>AMOUNT</u>	<u>Status</u>
Other Non-State \$ Being Applied to Project During Project Period: Various non-state sources	\$ 6,290,400	Pending and Secured
Other State \$ Being Applied to Project During Project Period: Bonding and/or Clean Water, Land, and Legacy Funds	\$ 500,000	Pending
In-kind Services During Project Period: Volunteer labor, Dakota County	\$ 145,000	
Remaining \$ from Current ENRTF Appropriation (if applicable): MeCC 2008: \$68,000 remaining unspent. MeCC 2009: \$1,111,700 remaining unspent but the majority of this amount is committed to specific projects. Dakota County: \$509,965 remaining unspent. Please see individual proposal budgets for additional detail. A 2010 MeCC appropriation for \$1,800,000 is pending.	\$ 1,689,665	Unspent but some of this amount is committed
Funding History: MeCC 2005: \$3,260,000; 2007: \$2,435,000; 2008: \$3,150,000; 2009: \$3,375,000	\$ 12,220,000	

Metro Conservation Corridors - Phase VI (2011-2012)		Date: 4/9/10									
Table A: Summary of Proposed Funding & Accomplishments		LCCMR Dollars Requested: \$7,036,100									
Result / Activity	Partner	Proposed Project Funding				Proposed Accomplishments				Areas of Focus	
		LCCMR Funds		Other Funds		ENRTF		Other Funds			Total Project Acres Completed (LCCMR & Other Funds combined)
		LCCMR Funds Requested	Other State Funding Proposed	Other Non-State Funding Proposed	Total Project Funds Proposed (LCCMR, Other State Funds & Non-State Funds combined)	LCCMR Acres/Miles Proposed	Other Funds Acres/Miles Proposed	ACRES	MILES		
ACRES	MILES	ACRES	MILES								
1. Coordinate MeCC Program											
1.1. MeCC Partnership coordination, mapping, and outreach	Led by Minnesota Land Trust	\$20,000	\$0	\$0	\$20,000						N/A
1.2. MeCC Mapping and database work	Led by DNR	\$30,000	\$0	\$0	\$30,000						N/A
SUBTOTAL		\$50,000	\$0	\$0	\$50,000	0	0.00	0	0.00		
2. Restore & Enhancement Significant Habitat											
2.1. Restore and enhance significant watershed habitat	Friends of the Mississippi River	\$232,600		\$235,000	\$467,600	200		145		345	Mississippi - SNA and WMA lands
2.2. Lower Minnesota River Watershed Restoration & Enhancement Project	Friends of MN Valley *	\$0			\$0						N/A
2.3. Restoring our lands and waters	Great River Greening	\$490,500		\$500,000	\$990,500	135	0.14	201	0.11	336	Mississippi River; Wild & Scenic Rivers; Pilot Knob; Scott Co.; Washington Co.; Urban Core
2.4. Habitat restoration grants	DNR - CCA (formally Metro Greenways) **	\$0			\$0						N/A
2.5. Scientific & Natural Area (SNA) restoration & enhancement	DNR - Ecological Resources **	\$0			\$0						N/A
2.6. Restore and enhance remnant oak savannas and native prairie on the Minnesota	MN Valley NWR Trust, Inc.	\$163,000		\$163,000	\$326,000	470				470	MN Valley NWR Units in Hennepin, Scott, and Sibley counties
2.7. Lakeshore and riparian restoration in Dakota County	Dakota County***	\$162,400				100				100	Vermillion River, Cannon River, Marcott Lake, Lake Marion
SUBTOTAL		\$1,048,500	\$0	\$898,000	\$1,946,500	905	0.14	346	0.11	1,251	
3. Acquire Significant Habitat											
3.1. Critical land protection program	The Trust for Public Land	\$1,000,000	\$500,000	\$500,000	\$2,000,000	61	0.60	61	0.60	122	Savage Fen, Lindstrom, Rum River, St. Croix, Prior Lake
3.2. Protecting significant habitat by acquiring conservation easements.	Minnesota Land Trust	\$900,000		\$1,000,000	\$1,900,000	300				300	Rum River, Valley Creek, St. Croix, Cannon River
3.3. Expand the Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge.	MN Valley NWR Trust, Inc.	\$1,000,000		\$1,000,000	\$2,000,000	250		250		500	MN Valley NWR units in Carver, LeSueur, Scott and/or Sibley Counties
3.4. Grants & acquisition of fee title & conservation easements.	DNR - CCA (formally Metro Greenways) **	\$0			\$0						N/A
3.5. DNR Fish & Wildlife Acquisition.	DNR - Fisheries & Wildlife	\$500,000		\$250,000	\$750,000	60	1.00	30	0.50	90	Browns Creek, Vermillion River
3.6. Scientific & Natural Area (SNA) Acquisition.	DNR - Ecological Resources **	\$0									N/A
3.7. Dakota County lakeshore and riparian protection	Dakota County***	\$2,537,600		\$2,642,400	\$5,180,000	1,024				1,024	Vermillion River, Cannon River, Marcott Lake, Lake Marion
SUBTOTAL		\$5,937,600	\$500,000	\$5,392,400	\$11,830,000	1,695	1.60	341	1.10	2,036	
4. Community Conservation Assistance											
4.1. Assist local governments to promote the conservation of natural habitats	DNR - CCA (formally Metro Greenways)	\$0			\$0						N/A
TOTAL		\$7,036,100	\$500,000	\$6,290,400	\$13,826,500	2,600	1.74	687	1.21	3,287	
* Partner not submitting a funding request this phase											
** Partner submitting a separate request to LCCMR											
*** New MeCC Partner											
Minnesota Land Trust's proposed non-state funds represent estimated value of donated conservation easements.											

Metro Conservation Corridors

2011 - PHASE VI



-  Metro Conservation Corridors
-  Counties
-  Major Highways
-  Lakes & Rivers

For specific project locations, please see maps depicted in individual proposals.



Minnesota Land Trust

Our land. Our water. Our future.

Some things should be forever.

Minnesota Land Trust Organizational Overview

The Minnesota Land Trust preserves Minnesota's natural and scenic heritage through public and private partnerships. A 501(c)(3) public charity, the Minnesota Land Trust has been working with landowners and local communities since 1991 through the following three strategies:

- **PROTECT:** Directly protecting land through conservation easements, land acquisition and effective land management.
- **ASSIST:** Providing agencies, communities and organizations with assistance in planning and delivering on-the-ground conservation in order to expand the State's overall capacity.
- **ENGAGE:** Helping to foster a culture of conservation, to support enhanced conservation legislation and funding, and to ensure the state has highly-skilled, trained professionals.

As a statewide land trust, the Minnesota Land Trust has created a regional structure to deliver its programs effectively at a local level, with offices in Duluth, Ely, Red Wing and St. Paul. The Land Trust was one of first land trusts in the country to be accredited by the Land Trust Accreditation Commission and has also been recognized by the Charities Review Council as meeting all of its standards.

The Minnesota Land Trust has provided leadership and coordination for the MeCC Partnership for nearly a year.

Project Partners

The Minnesota Land Trust is joined in this MeCC proposal by the following state and local government programs and non-profit partners:

Trust for Public Land	Critical Land Protection Program - Acquisition
Friends of the Mississippi River	Restore & Enhance Significant Watershed Habitat
MN Valley Nat. Wildlife Refuge Trust	Priority Expansion & Restoration of MN Valley NW Refuge
Great River Greening	Restoring our Lands and Waters
DNR Fish and Wildlife	DNR Aquatic Management Area Acquisition
Dakota County	Lakeshore & Riparian Protection & Restoration
DNR Management Information Serv.	Partnership Mapping and Database

Project Manager Qualifications

The Minnesota Land Trust employs 10 staff, relies on the skills of nearly 100 dedicated volunteers, and is governed by an active 17-member Board of Directors.

Sarah Strommen serves as the Conservation Director for the Land Trust's central region. Sarah joined the Land Trust staff in October 2005 and is responsible for developing and implementing the Land Trust's programs in the eleven-county greater metropolitan area and the counties to the west and north. Prior to joining the Land Trust, Sarah served as the Policy Director for the Friends of the Boundary Waters Wilderness. She also recently served on the State's Clean Water Council and on the City Council for the City of Ramsey, where her duties included being the Council's liaison to the City's Environmental Policy Board and the Lower Rum River WMO. Sarah has a bachelor's degree in Biology from Grinnell College and a master's degree in Environmental Management from Duke University. She also was a Fulbright Scholar in Costa Rica, where she investigated sustainable development and bird conservation.

