

**Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund
2014 Request for Proposals (RFP)**

Project Title:

ENRTF ID: 177-G

SNA Acquisition, Restoration, Improvement & Citizen Engagement

Category: G. Land Acquisition for Habitat and Recreation

Total Project Budget: \$ 3,951,870

Proposed Project Time Period for the Funding Requested: 2 Years, July 2014 - June 2016

Summary:

Diverse native plant communities and rare species habitat would be acquired as state Scientific and Natural Areas (SNAs) and their quality increased through restoration, site improvements, monitoring, and public involvement.

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Sponsoring Organization: MN DNR

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Location

Region: Statewide

County Name: Statewide

City / Township:

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



PROJECT TITLE: SNA Acquisition, Restoration, & Citizen Engagement

I. PROJECT STATEMENT

Sites of biodiversity significance identified by the Minnesota Biological Survey (MBS) and the new SNA Strategic Plan would be permanently protected as state Scientific and Natural Areas (SNAs), their quality improved, and public support for and involvement in their conservation will be increased by a suite of tools through the DNR SNA Program. About 500 acres of at risk, high quality native plant communities and wildlife habitat of state significance would be acquired and designated as SNAs. Native habitat restoration and site improvement activities would be implemented on about 900 acres of SNAs threatened by human impacts, invasives, and lack of natural disturbance regimes. Furthermore, to address gaps in sustaining SNAs and to increase citizen and student knowledge and skills about biodiversity conservation, the SNA outreach initiative would achieve about 60 naturalist-led events and a network of SNA site stewards at about 110 SNAs.

II. DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT ACTIVITIES

Activity 1: Protection of Sites of Biodiversity Significance

Budget: \$2,435,710

The SNA Program will protect and buffer MBS-recommended sites of biodiversity significance by acquisition and SNA designation of ~ 500 acres. Proactive landowner contacts will be targeted 10 high priority opportunity areas identified in the new SNA Strategic Plan, including prairie core areas in the Minnesota Prairie Conservation Plan. To be acquired and designated as SNA, the site must be recommended for SNA designation in an Ecological Evaluation report which serves as the site's baseline assessment for fee acquisitions AND must be part of a MBS-mapped biodiversity significance site (or be a geological feature of statewide significance). All such sites are predominantly MBS-mapped native plant communities and contain habitat for rare species and Species of Greatest Conservation Need. In addition, SNA staff uses criteria, such as landowner readiness and urgency, degree of threat, and partnership opportunities, to rank which recommended sites are currently pursued. The attached map and acquisition list identifies priority projects for this appropriation. DNR may request to add other qualifying sites to the list with additional MBS recommendations and changes in landowner interest, acquisition opportunity, or threats. Most acquisition will be of fee title, but if more appropriate for ongoing management and use, acquisition will be of a SNA-administered conservation easement with SNA designation. Conservation easement monitoring would be done on about 10 sites, including sites, if any, acquired in conservation easement with these funds. The SNA Program manages 18 SNA conservation easements at 10 designated SNAs. The SNA Strategic Plan (initiated through a 2011 ENRTF appropriation) will incorporate new MBS and other resource data into the GIS-based analysis to refine priorities and increase coordinated rare resource protection with partners and to implement State Wildlife Action Plan (SWAP). Natural Area Registry agreements will be established at least 18 biodiversity significance sites.

Outcome	Completion Date
1a. acquisition as SNA of ~500 acres of high quality habitat	6/30/16
1b. proactive landowner contact in 10 priority areas for protection	6/30/16
1c. monitoring for ~10 SNA conservation easements	6/30/16
1d. SNA/rare resource protection strategic prioritization – Phase 3	6/30/16
1e. 18 Natural Area Registry agreements on biodiversity significant sites	6/30/16

Activity 2: Native Habitat Restoration & Improvements

Budget: \$928,490

Native habitat restoration and site improvements activities would be completed on about 900 acres at ~30 SNAs. Interpretive signs-kiosks would be developed and installed at ~8 SNAs. Management plans will be completed for ~10 SNAs (including any sites acquired through these funds). Management practices at ~12 SNAs would be monitored to identify adaptive management process improvements needed to achieve better habitat



Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund (ENRTF)

2014 Main Proposal

Project Title: SNA Acquisition, Restoration, & Citizen Engagement

for rare species and Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN). Restoration and improvement activities – including bringing sites acquired up to minimum standards – will be carried out by DNR staff- SNA crews, Conservation Corps Minnesota (CCM), Sentence to Service (STS), volunteers, and/or contractors. Activities include seed collection, planting, exotics control, woody encroachment removal, site clean-up, signing (including development & installation of interpretive kiosks), fencing, prescribed burns (or alternative prescribed disturbance for ecological management purposes, such prescribed haying, mowing or grazing, necessary for sites or conditions where use of fire is limited), management plan preparation, monitoring, and coordination-oversight of projects implemented by partners. All restoration will use seeds/plants of a local ecotype, collected from onsite or within 25 miles. Restoration and improvements of degraded and rare land features (particularly native prairie, savanna, and forest helps implement the SWAP and achieve Habitat Recommendation 5 of the SCPP. This activity and its funding would include all work needed to bring up to the Department's minimum standards those SNA parcels acquired through this funding and will include that restoration and improvements of newly acquired sites which is ecologically advisable and feasible within the appropriation period.

Outcome	Completion Date
2a. ~30 acres of restoration of forest, prairie, & outcrop sites	6/30/16
2b. ~335 acres of woody removal & exotics species treatment	6/30/16
2c. ~660 acres of prescribed burns	6/30/16
2d. ~8 SNA interpretive kiosks installed AND development work on ~25 sites	6/30/16
2e. management plans completed for ~10 SNAs	6/30/16
2f. adaptive management monitoring on ~12 SNA sites	6/30/16

Activity 3: Public Engagement in Natural Areas

Budget: \$587,670

The SNA Outreach Initiative will engage residents, students, and other interested people in ecological recreation and education activities on SNAs. This includes expanding and supporting a network of about 110 SNA volunteer site stewards; co-sponsoring and coordinating about 60 events including volunteer site restoration and management work days and recreation-educational events (guided nature hikes, citizen-science activities, etc) and evaluating the effectiveness of these actions. New or refined electronic/social media communications tools will be developed and disseminated to increase and enhance recreationist's use of SNAs.

Outcome	Completion Date
3a. SNA website, e-book, social media enhancements	6/30/16
3b. ~ 60 volunteer events (site management work days & rec.-ed. events)	6/30/16
3c. network of about 110 volunteer site stewards	6/30/16

III. PROJECT STRATEGY

A. Project Team/Partners

This proposal includes the DNR's work and funding to be used by the SNA program towards partnership project work on SNAs. Partners include entities, such as The Nature Conservancy, Friends of the Mississippi River, and Great River Greening.

B. Timeline Requirements

Two years (July 1, 2014 through June 30, 2016) is requested to provide multiple field seasons for restoration and development work and to take protection projects through basic improvements needed.

C. Long-Term Strategy and Future Funding Needs

The SNA Long Range Plan goal is protection by SNA designation 5 occurrences of each native plant community and 3 occurrences of each natural heritage element per landscape. Thus, the Division could utilize support from the Environment and Natural Resources Trust fund of \$5M to \$10M per biennium over the next 20 years.

2014 Detailed Project Budget

Project Title: **SNA Acquisition, Restoration, Improvement & Public Engagement**

IV. TOTAL ENRTF REQUEST BUDGET 2 years

BUDGET ITEM	AMOUNT
Personnel: ~ 9.6 FTE for direct project activities spread across ~25 classified & unclassified staff paid primarily through special project funds, including ~15-20% fringe benefits as per state union contracts: 1.9 FTE coordinators (acquisition, outreach, management) (~\$299.5K) 5.7 FTE specialists, naturalists, technicians, planner/GIS (~\$807.1K) 2.0 FTE laborers & seasonal crews (~\$118.8K)	\$ 1,225,440
Contracts - Professional-technical: e.g. mgmt plan prep, monitoring, video/photo, etc. (~\$155K) CCM & Other Field Operations: e.g. invasives, woody removal, RxBurn, etc. (~\$143K)	\$ 298,000
Equipment/Tools/Supplies: e.g. fencing, signs, PPE, other field tools, etc.	\$ 91,360
Acquisition (Fee Title or Permanent Easements): 500 acres to be designated SNA & administered by SNA program; in fee or conservation easement; includes transaction costs	\$ 2,100,000
Travel: DNR fleet charges (for operation of trucks, cars, & special fieldwork equipment) & instate travel costs (as per state contracts)	\$ 54,200
Additional Budget Items: printing (designation orders, information materials, etc (~\$6K) MNIT database/website development & support (~\$20K) Direct and necessary business services required to support this proposal (~\$151.87K).	\$ 182,870
TOTAL ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES TRUST FUND \$ REQUEST =	\$ 3,951,870

V. OTHER FUNDS

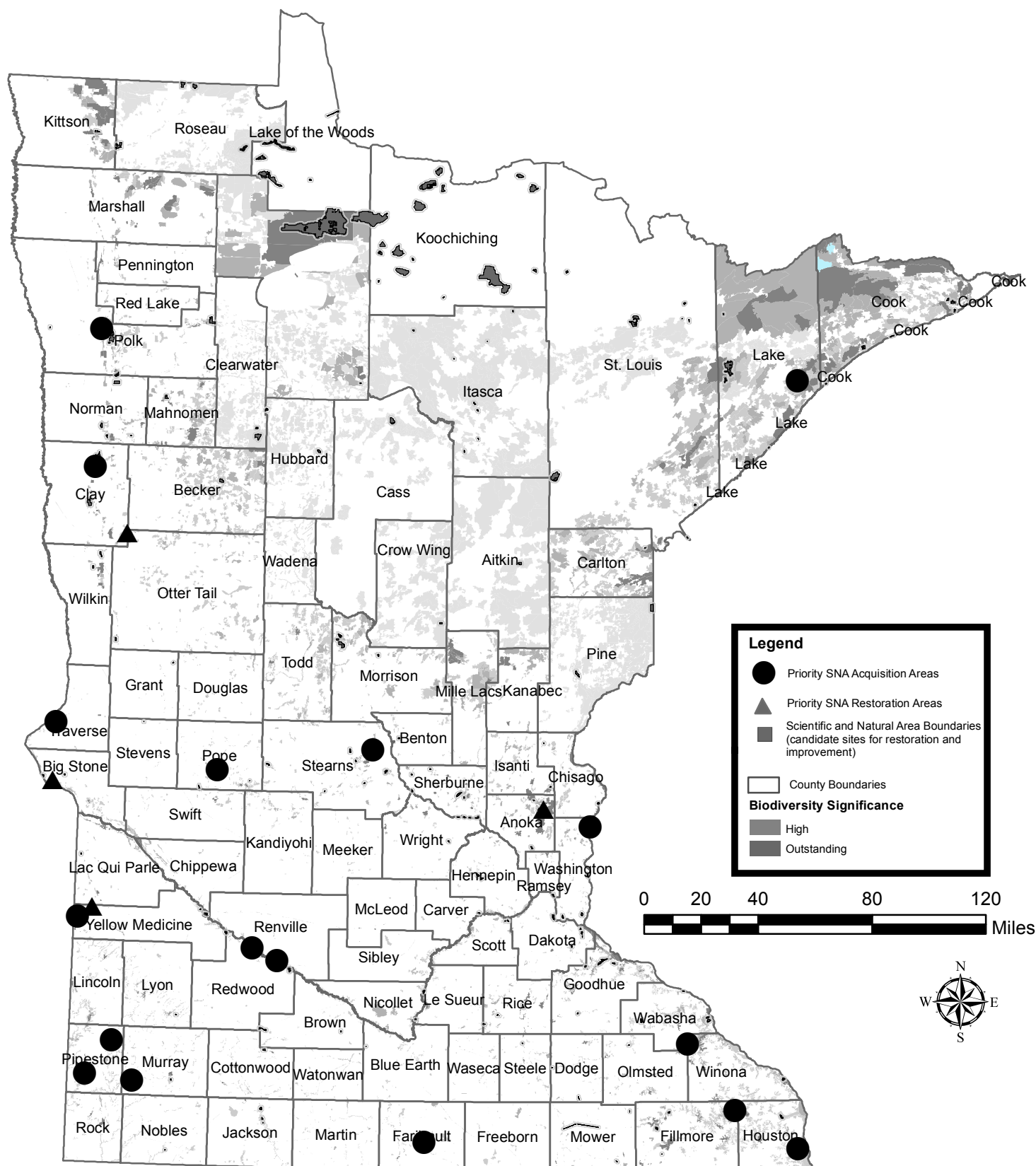
SOURCE OF FUNDS	AMOUNT	Status
Other Non-State \$ Being Applied to Project During Project Period: Potential: partial landowner donations, federal State Wildlife Action grants; any actual \$s would be reported & accomplishments pro-rated.	\$ -	
Other State \$ Being Applied to Project During Project Period: No other state funds are proposed; if any activities are split funded their accomplishment acres will be pro-rated.	\$ -	
In-kind Services During Project Period: DNR office facilities, supervisor-manager time, & other support will be provided (but contributions not tracked).	\$ -	
Remaining \$ from Current ENRTF Appropriation (if applicable): BALANCES AS OF 5/22/13: 2010 SNA & Native Prairie Restoration, Enhancement & Acquisition - Balance: \$268.2 unexpended of which \$37.5K is encumbered; 2011 SNA Acquisition, Restoration, & Citizen Engagement - Balance: \$1.063M unexpended of which \$87.8K is encumbered.	\$ 1,331,358	unspent - see notes to left
Funding History FY2011-2014: LCCMR appropriations: 2010 SNA Statewide & Native Prairie Stewardship \$1.175M ; 2011 SNA Statewide \$1.64M; 2013 SNA Conservation, Restoration, Enhancement & Citizen Engagement \$1.5M. LSOHC appropriations: 2010 Accelerated Prairie (SNA & NPB part only) \$1.311M; 2010 Accelerated Forest (SNA part only) \$733.6K; 2011 SNA & NPB Acquisition \$1.07M; 2011 Prairie Restoration & Enhancement (SNA & NPB part only) \$449.9K; 2012 DNR Prairie/Grassland Habitat Restoration & Enhancement (SNA & NPB part only) \$461.6K; DNR Accelerated Prairie Grassland Restoration & Enhancement (SNA & NPB part only) \$240.3K; WMA, SNA & NPB Acquisition (SNA & NPB part only) \$1.0M. Bonding: none. Federal: State Wildlife Grants 2010 \$137K & 2012 \$49.8K. Other: partner contributions & landowner donations.	\$ 9,768,200	includes some funds for NPB & other non-SNA site work

#	Acquisition or Restoration Parcel Name	Geographic Coordinates Format: [Deg.]° [Min.]' [Sec.]" [Hemis.]		County	Estimated Cost	Ecological Significance	Activity Description	# of Acres	# of Shoreline Miles	Type of Landowner	Proposed Fee Title or Easement Holder (if applicable)
		Latitude	Longitude								
1	Felton Prairie SNA addition	47-4-41.7	96-25-7.1	Clay	\$ 1,200,000	Prairie Plan Core Area - wet & mesic prairie; prairie chickens & rare prairie birds	fee title acquisition	400		private ind/trust or non-profit	DNR-SNA
2	Glacial Lakes & Moraine	45-31-46.1	95-30-20.7	Pope	\$ 900,000	Prairie Plan Core Area - dry sand gravel prairie	fee title acquisition	300		private ind/trust or non-profit	DNR-SNA
3	Glacial Ridge	47-39-46.1	96-22-19.1	Polk	\$ 300,000	Prairie Plan Core Area - mesic & wet prairie; rare plants & birds	fee title acquisition	300		private ind/trust or non-profit	DNR-SNA
4	Lake Traverse Prairie	45-43-27.6	96-41-15.6	Traverse	\$ 380,000	Prairie Plan Core Area - dry hill prairie; rare plants & animals	fee title acquisition	100		private ind/trust	DNR-SNA
5	Art Lake Hardwood Ridges	47-30-26.9	91-12-13.3	Lake	\$ 420,000	MBS-mapped ecologically intact area with oldgrowth sugar maple & upland white cedar forest on remote ridges; rare birds	fee title acquisition	160		private	DNR-SNA
6	St Wendel-Partch Woods addition	45-37-22.6	94-22-35.4	Stearns	\$ 640,000	MBS-mapped hardwood forest & tamarack bog/sedge meadow	fee title acquisition	160		private ind/trust or	DNR-SNA
7	Brownsville Bluff	43-40-40.6	91-16-57.1	Houston	\$ 560,000	Forested Mississippi River bluff with rare animals	fee title acquisition	200		private ind/trust or	DNR-SNA
8	Falls Creek	45-15-33.9	92-45-58.26	Washington	\$ 250,000	old-growth mesic hardwood forest, native white pines, black ash seepage swamp, deep gorge exposing layers of bedrock, filled with seeps & a waterfall	fee title acquisition	50		private ind/trust	DNR-SNA
9	Rushford Bluffs	43-48-54.6	91-45-12.5	Fillmore	\$ 150,000	oak-shagbark hickory woodland, bluff prairie	fee title acquisition	50		private ind/trust	DNR-SNA
10	Upper Beaver Creek Valley	44-08-34.34	92-03-40.82	Wabasha	\$ 980,000	MBS-mapped bluff prairie, forest, & cliff native plant communities; providing connectivity to Whitewater WMA parcels	fee title acquisition	280	2.35	private ind/trust	DNR-SNA
11	Drake Woods	43-33-54.0	94-6-23.51	Faribault	\$ 1,800,000	best intact MBS mapped hardwood forest in south central MN	fee title acquisition	300		private ind/trust	DNR-SNA
12	Cedar Rock SNA addition	44-36-57.3	95-10-22.4	Redwood	\$ 280,000	MBS-mapped rock outcrop & mesic prairie	fee title acquisition	80		private ind/trust	DNR-SNA
13	Mound Spring Prairie addition/Wergeland Prairie	44-45-29.7	96-26-10.1	Yellow Medicine	\$ 480,000	MBS-mapped wet & mesic prairie	fee title acquisition	160		private ind/trust	DNR-SNA
14	Chanarambie Creek	43-54-22.4	96-1-51.9	Murray	\$ 400,000	MBS-mapped dry hill prairie & prairie meadow	fee title acquisition	120		private ind/trust	DNR-SNA
15	Prairie Coteau SNA addition	44-7-14.0	96-8-58.5	Pipestone	\$ 1,000,000	MBS-mapped dry hill prairie, with rare species	fee title acquisition	200		private ind/trust	DNR-SNA
16	Pipestone Outcrops	44-1-13.5	96-19-33.4	Pipestone	\$ 800,000	MBS-mapped rock outcrop, dry prairie, with rare species	fee title acquisition	160		private ind/trust	DNR-SNA
17	Morton Outcrops	44-33-3.9	94-59-31.4	Renville	\$ 24,000	MBS-mapped rock outcrop, prairie, with rare species	fee title &.or easement acquisition	6		private ind/trust	DNR-SNA
18	Blanket Flower SNA	46-38-11.46	96-17-34.6	Clay	\$ 40,000	restore dry sand gravel prairie comparable to adjoining MBS mapped prairie	reconstruction	20		public	DNR-SNA
19	Boot Lake SNA	45-20-0.62	93-7-39.5	Anoka	\$ 12,500	restore oak woodland comparable to adjoining MBS mapped woodland	reconstruction	5		public	DNR-SNA
20	Mound Spring Prairie SNA	44-44-33.79	96-25-29.9	Yellow Medicine	\$ 75,000	restore mesic prairie comparable to adjoining MBS mapped prairie	reconstruction	50		public	DNR-SNA
21	Bonanza Prairie SNA	45-27-8.20	96-42-41.2	Big Stone	\$ 36,000	restore dry hill prairie comparable to adjoining MBS mapped prairie	reconstruction	20		public	DNR-SNA

NOTES:

SNA Acquisition, Restoration, Improvement & Citizen Engagement

2014 Target Areas for SNA Acquisition, Restoration and Improvement



Project Manager Qualifications: Margaret (Peggy) Booth

WORK EXPERIENCE

MN DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES:

Ecological & Water Resources, Scientific & Natural Area (SNA) Program Supervisor (May 2006-present)

Manager and supervisor of SNA program – responsible for oversight of acquisition and management of system of about 160 state SNAs and the Division's prairie program (including Native Prairie Bank Conservation Easements, Prairie Stewardship, and Prairie Tax Exemption); managing these program's operating and capital budgets totaling up to about \$10 million. LCCMR project manager of several SNA appropriations.

Regional Operations, Community Assistance Manager (Sept 2002-May 2006)

Including LCMR program manager of the Metro Conservation (Wildlife) Corridors partnership – Phase I and Phase II.

Forestry Division, Metro Region Forestry Manager (July 1997-Sept 2002)

Forestry Division, State Urban & Community Forestry Program Coordinator (April 1995-June 1997)

Including LCMR program manager for Minnesota ReLeaf.

Forestry Division, Consultant (Oct 1992-April 1995)

Including providing technical assistance for LCMR-supported Minnesota ReLeaf Program and author of *Energy Conservation through Community Forestry*, and d) *Energy Conserving Landscapes: the Minnesota Homeowner's Guide*.

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA, Department of Landscape Architecture:

Administrator/Director of Center for Community Studies (1983-1992)

Lecturer/Teaching Specialist (1982-92)

Research: Planting for Energy Conservation (1989-1992)

Including LCMR Project Manager for the University's \$199,450 research project (part of the \$1.25 million Minnesota ReLeaf program) entitled *Tree and Shrub Planting for Energy Conservation in Minnesota Communities*. Assisted DNR on *Minnesota ReLeaf Implementation Plan*, the Minnesota ReLeaf Implementation Plan Work Group, and *Carbon Dioxide Budgets in Minnesota and Recommendations for Reducing Emissions with Trees*. Author of *Planting for Energy Conservation in the North*.

CITY OF MINNEAPOLIS, Planning Department:

City Planner II – Urban Design (1975-1980)

EDUCATION

MASTER OF LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE, University of Minnesota Graduate School

BACHELOR OF LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE, University of Minnesota

Organization Description

MN Department of Natural Resources - Division of Ecological and Water Resources SCIENTIFIC & NATURAL AREA (SNA) PROGRAM

Charged under MS 86A.05 to protect and perpetuate in an undisturbed natural state those natural features that possess exceptional scientific or education value. The program acquires, manages and facilitates public use of SNAs; oversees the Natural Area Registry; and provides native prairie stewardship assistance, including Native Prairie Bank conservation easements (MS 84.96 & 84.961).

