

**Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund  
2015 Request for Proposals (RFP)**

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**Project Title:**

**ENRTF ID: 126-F**

MeCC VIII: FMR Restoring Prairie and Forest Habitat

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**Category:** F. Methods to Protect, Restore, and Enhance Land, Water, and Habitat

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**Total Project Budget:** \$ 276,482

**Proposed Project Time Period for the Funding Requested:** 3 years, July 2015 - June 2018

**Summary:**

FMR will conduct restoration activities on 100 acres of forest/savanna and 160 acres of prairie in the Twin Cities area to preserve and increase wildlife habitat.

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**Name:** Tom Lewanski

**Sponsoring Organization:** Friends of the Mississippi River

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**Location**

**Region:** Metro

**County Name:** Dakota, Hennepin, Washington

**City / Township:** Vermillion Twnshp, City of Cottage Grove, City of Hastings, City of Minneapolis, City of Ro

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**Alternate Text for Visual:**

The map illustrates the project sites within the Metro Conservation Corridors in the Twin Cities.

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

**PROJECT TITLE:** Metro Conservation Corridors (MeCC) Phase VIII-Friends of the Mississippi River. Restoring Prairie and Forest Habitat.

## **I. PROJECT STATEMENT**

FMR will conduct prairie restoration activities on 160-acres at 5 sites within the Metro Corridors. These restoration activities will have multiple benefits. They will improve or increase habitat for native pollinators by increasing host and nectar plants. When seeding, mixes will be developed to maximize plants that benefit pollinators. Habitat for Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN) will also be increased through these activities. Several of the proposed sites are associated with surface water and the restoration activities at these sites will have water quality benefits by installing deep-rooted prairie plants near the shorelines, reducing erosion and the amount of sediment and chemicals entering the water. Being within the Metro area, these sites provide examples of diverse native prairie for area residents to enjoy and learn about. One of the proposed sites is the 180<sup>th</sup> St. marsh in Vermillion Township. Dakota County is in the process of negotiating the acquisition of a 20-acre parcel within the marsh. It is being acquired because it contains important habitat for numerous SGCN, pollinators, & amphibians and because it has water quality benefits. No restoration activities will take place until it comes into public ownership. The other sites include Spring Lake Park Reserve, Sand Coulee SNA, Ole Olson Park, and Grey Cloud Dunes SNA.

FMR will conduct restoration activities, using best management practices, on 100 acres of forest/woodland at two sites, an oak savanna remnant at the Old Mill Park along the Vermillion River in Hastings, and a portion of the Hampton Woods in Hampton Township in Dakota County. The Hampton Woods is a large diverse deciduous forest in central Dakota County that provides breeding habitat for number of rare species and SGCNs. Dakota County is in the process of negotiating the acquisition of about 180-acres of the forest. No restoration activities will take place until it comes into public ownership. The oak forest of Hampton Woods was of such significant ecological quality that it was recommended for inclusion in the state Scientific and Natural Area Program in 1994, although this did not occur. These woods have a relatively small amount of exotic invasive plants. By acting early we can be more effective and efficient in controlling them and preserving the diverse habitat that it currently offers. FMR is also talking with Dr. Frelich, Director of the Center for Forest Ecology at the U. of M., to partner on the project to better understand how the forest responds to various restoration activities. FMR will explore utilizing any woody material removed from the forest for fuel at District Energy in St. Paul.

There are two overall goals for this project.

- The first goal is to contribute to the long-term preservation of existing natural communities, especially forest and prairie, and the critical habitat they provide for pollinators and species in decline. By conducting restoration activities, we can help preserve and enhance the viability of the forests and prairies at these proposed sites and the wildlife that are dependent on them.
- A second goal is to increase the amount of native habitat at specific sites by restoring natural communities to land that is highly disturbed, while helping to protect and improve water quality at a number of sites.

Restoration activities will be conducted on public land and each site will have a Natural Resource Management Plan in place.

## **II. PROJECT ACTIVITIES AND OUTCOMES**

### **Activity 1: Prairie restoration**

**Budget: \$131,782**

We will restore 5 acres of prairie at 2 sites by conducting prescribed burning, herbicide application, soil preparation, and seeding, followed by 2 seasons of mowing (108<sup>th</sup> St. Marsh-Dakota County & Ole Olson Park-

Minneapolis Park Board). We will conduct restoration activities on an additional 155 acres of existing prairie at other sites. This may include installing native plants, conducting prescribed burns, and controlling exotic plants (Grey Cloud Dunes & Sand Coulee SNA-MNDNR, Spring Lake Park-Dakota County).

**Activity 2: Forest/woodland restoration**

**Budget: \$144,700.00**

We will conduct restoration activities on 92 acres of forest. These activities will include cutting, treating, stacking and burning or chipping of exotic brush. We will also do follow up treatment of missed stumps and resprouts, if needed. (Hampton Woods-Dakota County). We will continue the restoration activities at Old Mill Park oak savanna in Hastings by conducting a prescribed burn and treating brush resprouts and weedy forbs on 8 acres.

Outcome	Completion Date
1. Conduct prairie restoration on 160-acres.	6/30/18
2. Conduct restoration activities on 92 acres of forest.	6/30/18
3. Conduct restoration activities on 8 acres of oak savanna.	6/30/18

**III. PROJECT STRATEGY**

**Project Team/Partners**

The FMR team includes Tom lewanski, Karen Schik, Barb Heintz, and Joe Walton.

Project partners: (None of the following partners will receive funds from this appropriation other than having restoration done on land that they own) Dakota County, the State of Minnesota, City of Hastings, Minneapolis Park Board.

**B. Timeline Requirements**

FMR is planning to complete the activities presented in this proposal by June 30, 2018. However, unforeseen natural occurrences and conditions such as extremely late spring or wet conditions could prevent some of these activities from being completed in this time frame.

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

FMR has been strategically focused on specific areas within the designated corridors for over a decade. This has allowed us to stay engaged with projects, landowners, partners and communities, helping to ensure the continuous improvement and expansion of the habitat values at these sites, while protecting the public investment that has been made in them. Starting with individual parcels, our project areas have grown by orders of magnitude to protect and restore large tracts of land, ultimately creating contiguous greenway corridors. The protection, restoration and enhancement projects presented in this work program are all part of larger projects both in the sense of time and area. Because of human induced changes in the landscape, natural areas require management. While it is often the case that initial restoration and enhancement require relatively large investments initially, the costs often decrease over time as the goals for a site are met and the project enters a more maintenance level of activity, such as conducting period burns on restored prairie. FMR is committed to conducting fundraising from both public and private sources, for the ongoing restoration and enhancement activities required at these sites over time.

## 2015 Detailed Project Budget

**Project Title:** Metro Conservation Corridors (MeCC) Phase VIII-Friends of the Mississippi River. Restoring Prairie and Forest

### IV. TOTAL ENRTF REQUEST BUDGET 3 years - \$276,483

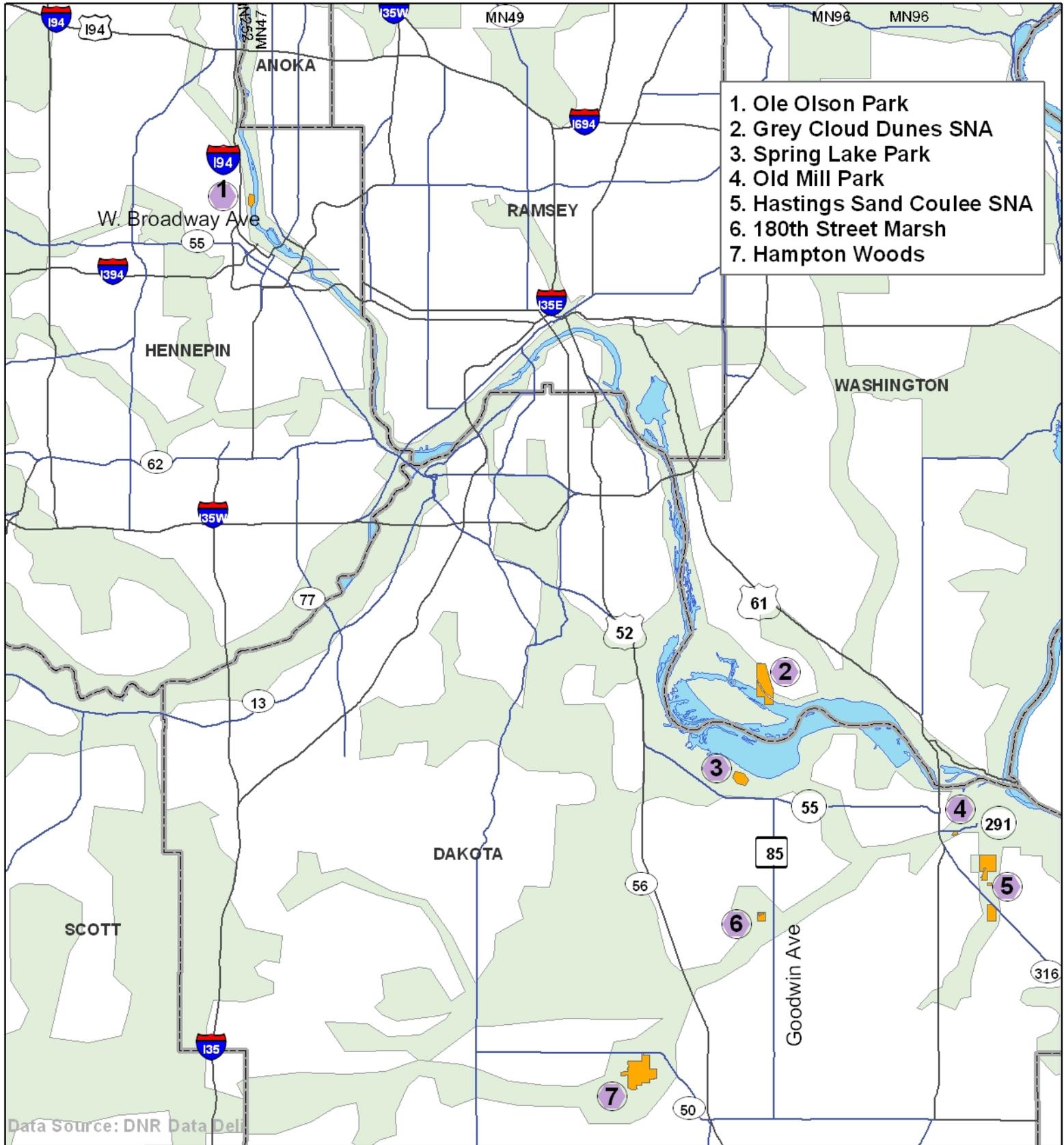
<u>BUDGET ITEM</u>	<u>AMOUNT</u>
<b>Personnel:</b>	\$ 18,611
Conservation Director: \$2016. Overall project management, assist with evaluation of restoration projects, partner communications, landowner relations. .020 FTE. 88% salary, 12% benefits.	
Ecologist (2): \$15,965. Plan/organize restoration activities, develop and put out bids, hire and oversee vendors, guide restoration activities, evaluate restoration activities. .065 FTE. 86% Salary, 14% Benefits.	
Bookkeeper: \$651. Pay invoices received. Assist in developing reimbursement documentation, track and document staff expenses. .01FTE. 86% Salary, 14% Benefits.	
<b>Contracts:</b> Vendors to provide restoration services such as prescribed burns, soil prep., seeding, woody and exotic plant removal, herbicide application, etc. (Vendor contracts will be awarded on a competitive and performance basis.)	\$ 244,125
<b>Equipment/Tools/Supplies:</b> (fence, posts, signs, & plant material {Native seed, shrubs and trees} etc.)	\$ 12,966
<b>Travel:</b> Mileage to and from project sites and partner & landowner meetings.	\$ 780
<b>Additional Budget Items:</b>	
<b>TOTAL ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES TRUST FUND \$ REQUEST =</b>	<b>\$ 276,482</b>

### V. OTHER FUNDS

<u>SOURCE OF FUNDS</u>	<u>AMOUNT</u>	<u>Status</u>
<b>Other Non-State \$ To Be Applied To Project During Project Period:</b>		
Local units of government. Dakota County	\$ 20,000	<i>Pending</i>
Friends of the Mississippi River. staff time, contractor fees.	\$ 6,000	<i>Secured</i>
Watershed Districts	\$ 3,000	<i>Pending</i>
<b>Other State \$ To Be Applied To Project During Project Period:</b>	\$ -	
<b>In-kind Services To Be Applied To Project During Project Period:</b>	N/A	
<b>Funding History:</b> Amount of ENRTF FMR has received for habitat restoration through Metro Wildlife Corridors: 2003 appropriation - \$92,000, 2005 appropriation - \$90,000, 2007 appropriation - \$53,000, 2008 appropriation \$92,000, 2009 appropriation \$90,000, 2011 appropriation \$200,000. 2013 appropriation -\$304,000. OHF Metro Big Rivers IV - \$162,000. Metro Big Rivers V - \$160,000.	\$ 921,000	
<b>Remaining \$ from Current ENRTF Appropriation (if applicable):</b> 1. 2.1-MeCC6 – Restore and Enhance Significant Watershed Habitat. 2011 appropriation. \$25,000. 2. Metro Conservation Corridors (MeCC) Phase VII-Friends of the Mississippi River. Protect, Restore and Enhance Significant Watershed Habitat - 2013 appropriation \$141,600.	\$ 166,600	<i>As of 1/1/14. Not legally committed, but all remaining funds have been allocated to specific projects.</i>

#	Acquisition or Restoration Parcel Name	Geographic Coordinates Format: [Deg.]° [Min.]' [Sec.]" [Hemis.]		Estimated Cost	County	Ecological Significance	Activity Description	# of Acres	# of Shoreline Miles	Type of Landowner	Proposed Fee Title or Easement Holder (if applicable)
		Latitude	Longitude								
1	180th St. Marsh	4948443°13'39.4678"N	503029°54'43.3152"E	\$ 25,518.00	Dakota	Wetland and upland used by numerous SGCN bird species. In the Vermillion River floodplain. Water quality benefits.	Prairie restoration.	4		Proposed public. In process of being acquired. Dakota County	
2	Grey Cloud Dunes SNA	4959811°16'19.1098"N	503128°41'3.6477"E	\$ 65,198.00	Washington	Rare sand-gravel prairie with rare species. Pollinator habitat along the Mississippi River.	Exotic brush removal, invasive weed control, Rx burn on prairie	50		Public. DNR	
3	Hampton Woods	4940893°31'32.902"N	497762°55'25.0142"E	\$ 132,983.00	Dakota	Oak forest. Includes rare species and SGCNs in central Dakota County.	Exotic brush removal	100		Proposed public. In process of being acquired. Dakota County.	
4	Hastings Sand Coulee SNA	4951032°41'35.7686"N	514032°16'22.2952"E	\$ 23,338.00	Dakota	Rare sand-gravel prairie, including 14 rare species. SGCN and Pollinator habitat. Part of a local greenway.	Exotic species control, prescribed burn.	100		Public. DNR	
5	Old Mill Park	4952571°15'38.5041"N	512448°0'19.4784"E	\$ 11,718.00	Dakota	Remnant oak savanna along the Vermillion River. Rare species.	Prescribed burn and treating exotic brush and weedy forbs.	8		Public. City of Hastings.	
6	Ole Olson Park	4983241°14'18.1805"N	478236°59'16.8009"E	\$ 5,728.00	Hennepin	Mississippi river corridor, migratory flyway.	Prairie restoration	1		Public. Minneapolis Park Board.	
7	Spring Lake Park	4955646°10'39.1378"N	500994°23'46.3325"E	\$ 12,000.00	Dakota	Prairie, savanna & oak forest. Mississippi River corridor & migratory flyway. Pollinator habitat.	Prairie restoration	10		Public. Dakota County.	

# PROJECT TITLE: Metro Conservation Corridors (MeCC) Phase VIII Friends of the Mississippi River. Restoring Prairie and Forest Habitat.



1. Ole Olson Park
2. Grey Cloud Dunes SNA
3. Spring Lake Park
4. Old Mill Park
5. Hastings Sand Coulee SNA
6. 180th Street Marsh
7. Hampton Woods

Data Source: DNR Data Del

1:250,000



04/22/2014

## Legend

- Metro Conservation Corridors
- Site Number



**PROJECT TITLE:** Metro Conservation Corridors (MeCC) Phase VIII-Ecological Landscapes.  
Friends of the Mississippi River.

**Project Manager Qualifications:**

Tom Lewanski, Conservation Director

Tom holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Outdoor Education, and Masters & Doctorate degrees in Public Administration. Tom has over 27 years of experience working in the environmental/conservation field. Since 1998 he has served as FMR's Conservation Director. In that capacity Tom has led the organization's efforts to protect and restore land along the Mississippi River, resulting in the establishment of two new Scientific and Natural Areas in Dakota County and the protection and restoration of hundreds of acres of natural areas. A skilled naturalist, he taught environmental education at the Carpenter Nature Center for ten years. Tom is the lead staff person responsible for FMR's land conservation work.

**Organization Description:**

Friends of the Mississippi River (FMR) is a leading citizen organization working to protect and enhance the Mississippi River and its watershed in the Twin Cities area. We believe the tremendous ecological, cultural, scenic and recreational values of the river must be carefully tended to ensure that they continue to be shared equally by all citizens and that they endure for future generations. We accomplish these goals through three inter-related programs.

- Land Conservation: We work with public and private landowners to protect, restore and manage important natural areas along the river and its key tributaries.
- Watershed Protection: Working with citizens and local governments, we strive to draw attention to the health of local rivers, lakes and wetlands and bring citizen opinion to bear on decisions that improve water quality.
- River Corridor Stewardship: The Mississippi River cannot protect itself. We engage citizens in a variety of educational, recreational, and volunteer stewardship activities that give them the desire and the understanding to advocate on behalf of the river's public values at City Hall or the State Capitol.

