

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

Project Title:

ENRTF ID: 137-G

SNA Acquisition, Restoration, Enhancement and Public Engagement

Category: G. Land Acquisition for Habitat and Recreation

Total Project Budget: \$ 6,315,700

Proposed Project Time Period for the Funding Requested: 2 years, July 2015 – June 2017

Summary:

Sites of biodiversity significance will be permanently protected as state designated Scientific and Natural Areas, their quality improved, and public support for and involvement in their conservation will be increased.

Name: Peggy Booth

Sponsoring Organization: MN DNR

Address: 500 Lafayette Rd N, Box 25
St. Paul MN 55155

Telephone Number: (651) 259-5088

Email peggy.booth@state.mn.us

Web Address mndnr.gov/snas

Location

Region: Statewide

County Name: Statewide

City / Township:

Alternate Text for Visual:

Locations of proposed SNA acquisition and restoration areas on Minnesota state map with counties, existing SNAs, and high and outstanding biodiversity significance areas.

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



PROJECT TITLE: SNA Acquisition, Restoration, Enhancement & Public 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 700 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, enhancement, and site improvement activities would be implemented on about 600 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 70 naturalist-led events and a network of SNA site stewards at about 120 SNAs.

II. DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT ACTIVITIES

Activity 1: Protection of Sites of Biodiversity Significance

Budget: \$4,583,600

The SNA Program will protect and buffer MBS-recommended sites of biodiversity significance by acquisition and SNA designation of ~ 700 acres. Proactive landowner contacts will be targeted 14 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 applies an evaluation system to determine which candidate sites to pursue. The attached map and acquisition list identifies priority projects for this appropriation. DNR may request to add other qualifying sites to the list. Most acquisition will be of fee title, but if more appropriate, acquisition will be of a SNA-administered conservation easement with SNA designation. Monitoring will be done of about 10 SNA conservation easements. 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 about 18 biodiversity significance sites.

Outcome	Completion Date
1a. acquisition as SNA of ~700 acres of high quality habitat	6/30/17
1b. proactive landowner contact in 14 priority areas for protection	6/30/17
1c. monitoring for ~10 SNA conservation easements	6/30/17
1d. SNA/rare resource protection strategic prioritization – Phase 4	6/30/17
1e. 18 Natural Area Registry agreements on biodiversity significant sites	6/30/17

Activity 2: Native Habitat Restoration, Enhancements & Improvements

Budget: \$1,153,850

Native habitat restoration and site improvements activities would be completed on about 600 acres at about 30 SNAs. Interpretive signs-kiosks would be developed and installed at about 6 SNAs. SNA staff will provide ecological and technical guidance and on-site verification for 10 projects implemented by partners on SNAs. Management plans will be completed for about 13 SNAs (including sites acquired through these funds). Ecological resources and management practices at about 28 SNAs would be monitored to identify adaptive management process improvements needed to achieve better habitat for rare species and Species of Greatest Conservation Need. Restoration and improvement activities – including bringing sites acquired up to minimum



Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund (ENRTF)

2015 Main Proposal

Project Title: SNA Acquisition, Restoration, Enhancement & Public Engagement

standards – will be carried out by DNR staff- SNA crews, Conservation Corps Minnesota, Sentence to Service, volunteers, and/or contractors. Activities include seed collection, site preparation, planting and aftercare, invasives control, woody encroachment removal, site clean-up, signing, interpretive kiosks, fencing, prescribed burns (or alternative prescribed disturbance for ecological management purposes, such as prescribed haying, mowing or grazing, necessary 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 enhancement of degraded and rare land features helps implement the State Wildlife Action Plan 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	6/30/17
2b. ~160 acres of woody removal & exotics species treatment	6/30/17
2c. ~420 acres of prescribed burns	6/30/17
2d. ~6 SNA interpretive kiosks installed AND development work on ~25 sites	6/30/17
2e. ecological/technical guidance for ~10 partnership projects	6/30/17
2f. management plans completed for ~13 SNAs	6/30/17
2g. adaptive management monitoring on ~28 SNA sites	6/30/17

Activity 3: Public Engagement in Natural Areas

Budget: \$539,120

The SNA Outreach Initiative will engage residents, students, and other interested people in ecological recreation and education activities on SNAs. This includes supporting a network of about 120 SNA volunteer site stewards; co-sponsoring and coordinating about 70 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 and refined electronic/social media communications tools, maps and interpretive information will be developed and disseminated to increase/ enhance recreationist’s use of SNAs.

Outcome	Completion Date
3a. SNA website, e-book, social media, maps & other interpretive info	6/30/17
3b. ~ 70 volunteer events (site management work days & rec.-ed. events)	6/30/17
3c. network of ~120 volunteer site stewards	6/30/17

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, Great River Greening, Sugarloaf Northshore Stewardship Association, local units of governments, and other non-profits.

B. Timeline Requirements

Two years (July 1, 2015 through June 30, 2017) 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.

2015 Detailed Project Budget

Project Title: SNA Acquisition, Restoration, Enhancement & Public Engagement

IV. TOTAL ENRTF REQUEST BUDGET 2 years

BUDGET ITEM	AMOUNT
Personnel: ~ 8.6 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: 2.0 FTE coordinators (acquisition, outreach, management) & planner/GIS (~\$360.9K) 5.4 FTE specialists, naturalists, technicians, full time laborers (~\$668.2K) 1.2 FTE part time laborers & seasonal crews (~\$70.8K)	\$ 1,187,100
Contracts - Professional-technical: e.g. mgmt plan prep, monitoring, video/photo, etc. (~\$100K) CCM & Field Operations: e.g. invasives, woody removal, RxBurn; & CCM for outreach assistance (~\$282K)	\$ 382,000
Equipment/Tools/Supplies: e.g. signs, fencing, PPE, field tools/chemicals, safety supplies, etc.	\$ 113,600
Acquisition (Fee Title or Permanent Easements): 700 acres to be designated SNA & administered by SNA program; in fee or conservation easement; includes transaction costs	\$ 4,320,000
Travel: DNR fleet charges (for operation of trucks, cars, & special fieldwork equipment) & instate travel costs (as per state contracts)	\$ 83,900
Additional Budget Items: printing (designation orders, interpretive kiosk graphics, & info. materials (~\$15.4K) MNIT database/website development & support (~\$35.0K) DNR's direct and necessary costs pay for activities that are directly related to and necessary for accomplishing appropriated programs/projects. In addition to itemized costs captured in our proposal budget, direct and necessary costs cover HR Support (~\$22,807), Safety Support (~\$5,642), Financial Support (~\$22,776), Communication Support (~\$5,705), IT Support (~\$35,913), Planning Support (~\$3,520), Procurement Support (~\$1,175), and division and regional program management (~\$81,118) that are necessary to accomplishing funded programs/projects.	\$ 229,100
TOTAL ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES TRUST FUND \$ REQUEST =	\$ 6,315,700

V. OTHER FUNDS

SOURCE OF FUNDS	AMOUNT	Status
Other Non-State \$ Being Applied to Project During Project Period: Potential: partial landowner donations; 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, copiers, computer, communications; supervisor & manager time (but contributions not tracked).	\$ -	
Funding History FY2011-2015: LCCMR appropriations: 2010 SNA Statewide & Native Prairie Stewardship \$1.175M ; 2011 SNA Statewide \$1.64M; 2013 SNA Conservation, Restoration, Enhancement & Citizen Engagement \$1.5M; 2014 SNA Acquisition, Restoration, Improvements & Citizen Engagement \$2.54M (<i>pending</i>). 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; 2013 DNR Accelerated Prairie Grassland Restoration & Enhancement (SNA & NPB part only) \$240.3K; 2013 WMA, SNA & NPB Acquisition (SNA & NPB part only) \$1.0M; 2014 DNR Accelerated Prairie Grassland Restoration & Enhancement (SNA & NPB part only) \$571.0K (<i>pending</i>); 2014 WMA & SNA Acquisition (SNA part only) \$1.0M (<i>pending</i>) \$1.0M Bonding: none. Federal: State Wildlife Grants 2010 \$137K & 2012 \$49.8K. Other: partner contributions & landowner donations.	\$ 13,949,230	includes some funds for NPB & other non-SNA site work; some of these funds will be expended in FY16
Remaining \$ from Current ENRTF Appropriation (if applicable): BALANCES AS OF 3/7/14: 2010 SNA & Native Prairie Restoration, Enhancement & Acquisition - Balance: \$157.5 encumbered + \$42.2K other unexpended; 2011 SNA Acquisition, Restoration, & Citizen Engagement - Balance: \$507K encumbered + \$144.8K other unexpended; 2013 SNA Acquisition, Restoration, & Citizen Engagement - Balance: \$37.3 encumbered + \$1,271.4K other unexpended	\$ 1,458,400	balance NOT encumbered - see notes to left

**Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund
2015 Proposed Acquisition/Restoration List**

Project Title: SNA Acquisition, Restoration, Enhancement & Public Engagement

Project Manager Name: Margaret (Peggy) Booth

Organization: MnDNR

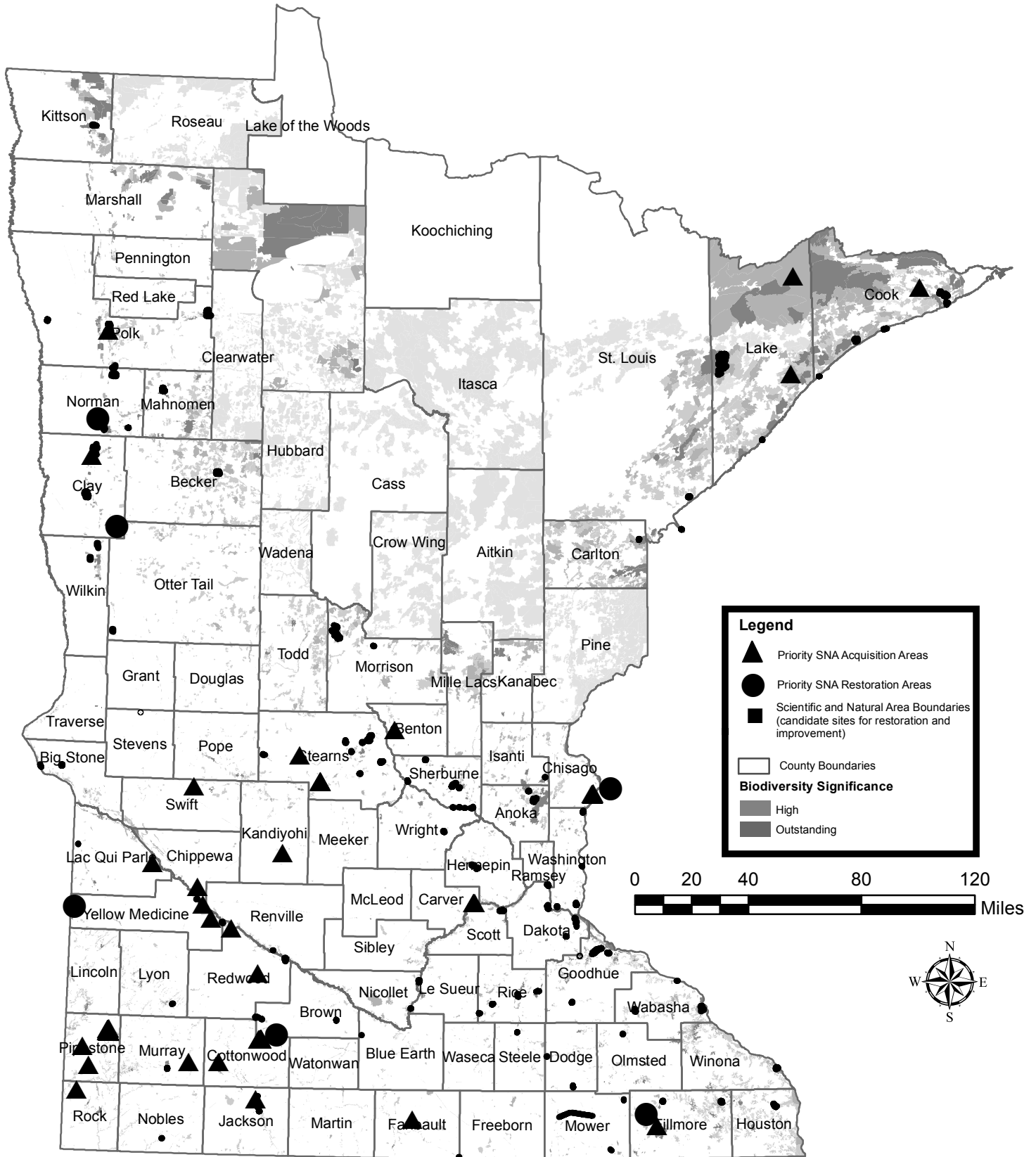
ENRTF \$ Request: \$6,315,700

#	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	Art Lake Hardwood Ridge	47° 30' 31.5"	91° 12' 8.9"	\$ 320,000	Lake	oldgrowth northern hardwood, lowland conifer	fee title acquisition	160		private	DNR-SNA
2	Blue Devil SNA	44° 47' 32.4"	95° 32' 36.7"	\$ 800,000	Yellow	MBS-mapped prairie/outcrop	fee title acquisition	200		private	DNR-SNA
3	Cedar Mountain SNA addition	44° 30' 22"	94° 54' 16"	\$ 800,000	Redwood	MBS-mapped prairie/outcrop with rare features	fee title acquisition	200		private ind/trust	DNR-SNA
4	Cedar Rock SNA addition	44° 36' 57.3"	95° 10' 22.4"	\$ 320,000	Redwood	MBS-mapped rock outcrop & mesic prairie	fee title acquisition	80		private ind/trust	DNR-SNA
5	Chanarambie Creek	43° 54' 22.4"	96° 1' 51.9"	\$ 480,000	Murray	MBS-mapped dry hill prairie & prairie meadow	fee title acquisition	120		private ind/trust	DNR-SNA
6	Des Moines R prairie-	43° 44' 38.5"	95° 4' 8.7"	\$ 320,000	Jackson	MBS-mapped dry hill prairie	fee title acquisition	80	0.2	private	DNR-SNA
7	Drake Woods	43° 33'54.0"	94° 6' 23.51"	\$ 1,500,000	Fairbault	best intact MBS mapped hardwood forest in south central MN	fee title acquisition	300		private ind/trust	DNR-SNA
8	Englund Ecotone	45° 41' 19.3"	94° 8' 53.2"	\$ 2,148,000	Benton	oak forest, oak savanna, sedge meadow	fee title acquisition	358		private	DNR-SNA
9	Felton Prairie Complex	46° 52' 1.6"	94° 8' 53.2"	\$ 800,000	Clay	wet-mesic or dry prairie	fee title acquisition	200		private	DNR-SNA
10	Forestville-Saxifrage Hollow	43° 37' 59.2"	92° 13' 23.1"	\$ 440,000	Fillmore	algific talus slope, springshed in Root River watershed	fee title acquisition	110		private	DNR-SNA
11	Franconia Bluffs	45° 22' 4.9"	92° 41' 53.6"	\$ 480,000	Chisago	forested bluff along St. Croix River	fee title acquisition	80		private	DNR-SNA
12	Glacial Ridge Landscape	47° 36' 44.7"	96° 22' 25.4"	\$ 450,000	Polk	wet-mesic prairie	fee title acquisition	150		private	DNR-SNA
13	Gneiss Outcrops SNA addition	44° 46' 52.2"	95° 30' 28.7"	\$ 400,000	Chippewa	MBS-mapped rock outcrop	fee title acquisition	100	0.5	private ind/trust	DNR-SNA
14	Little Kandiyohi-Wakanda Lakes Peninsula Forest	45° 3' 53.2"	94° 58' 46.9"	\$ 1,560,000	Kandiyohi	MBS-mapped forest communities	fee title acquisition	260	7	private ind/trust	DNR-SNA
15	Benson Prairie	45° 22' 47.5"	95° 35' 47.5"	\$ 450,000	Swift	MBS-mapped wet prairie	fee title acquisition	90		private ind/trust	DNR-SNA
16	Mound Springs Prairie addition	44° 45' 29.7"	96° 26' 10.1"	\$ 800,000	Yellow Medicine	MBS-mapped wet & mesic prairie	fee title acquisition	160		private ind/trust	DNR-SNA
17	Myhr Creek Ridge	47° 50' 17.8"	90° 0' 29.1"	\$ 160,000	Cook	blackSpruce jack pine woodland	fee title acquisition	80		private	DNR-SNA
18	Orchid Bog	47° 58' 29.0"	91° 30' 50.7"	\$ 60,000	Lake	wetland plant community	fee title acquisition	40		private	DNR-SNA
19	Pipestone Outcrops	44° 1' 37.4"	96° 19' 31.3"	\$ 1,280,000	Pipestone	MBS-mapped rock outcrop, dry prairie, with rare species	fee title acquisition	320		private ind/trust	DNR-SNA
20	Prairie Coteau SNA addition	44° 7' 14.0"	96° 8' 58.5"	\$ 1,000,000	Pipestone	MBS-mapped dry hill prairie, with rare species. Critical habitat for skippers.	fee title acquisition	200		private ind/trust	DNR-SNA
21	Roscoe Prairie	44° 7' 14.0"	94° 40' 37"	\$ 240,000	Stearns	wet prairie with rare butterfly habitat adjacent to Roscoe Prairie	fee title acquisition	40		private	DNR-SNA
22	Rose Dell Prairie	45° 25' 12.7"	96° 21' 15.5"	\$ 400,000	Pipestone	MBS-mapped prairie with rare features	fee title acquisition	80		private ind/trust	DNR-SNA
23	Seminary Fen	44° 55' 15.4"	93° 18' 27.8"	\$ 120,000	Carver	calcareous fen	fee title acquisition	20		private	DNR-SNA
24	Spring Hill Fen	45° 33' 16.2"	94° 49' 29.6"	\$ 600,000	Stearns	calcareous fen	fee title acquisition	150		private	DNR-SNA
25	Swedes Forest SNA addition	44° 41' 19"	95° 21' 51.4"	\$ 1,200,000	Redwood	MBS-mapped outcrop with rare features	fee title acquisition	300		private ind/trust	DNR-SNA
26	Ten Mile Creek	44° 58' 54"	95° 52' 30.7"	\$ 200,000	Lac Qui Parle	MBS-mapped mesic prairie	fee title acquisition	40		private ind/trust	DNR-SNA
27	Blanket Flower Prairie	46° 41' 7.7"	96° 12' 18.1"	\$ 36,000	Clay	dry gravel prairie	restore prairie	36		public	DNR-SNA
28	Forestville-Saxifrage Hollow	43° 37' 59.2"	92° 13' 23.1"	\$ 95,400	Fillmore	springshed in Root River watershed	restore prairie on fee acquisition parcel	53		if property acquired as part of SNA	only if DNR-SNA
29	Franconia Bluffs	45° 22' 4.9"	92° 41' 53.6"	\$ 370,000	Chisago	St Croix River bluff	restore prairie	20		public	DNR-SNA
30	Mound Springs Prairie restoration	44° 45' 54.8"	96° 27' 3.8"	\$ 15,000	Yellow Medicine	restore mesic prairie comparable to adjoining MBS mapped prairie	restore mesic prairie	10		public	DNR-SNA
31	Rock Ridge Restoration	44° 5' 49.5"	95° 4' 14.5"	\$ 27,000	Cottonwood	restore mesic prairie comparable to adjoining MBS mapped prairie	restore mesic prairie	18		public	DNR-SNA
32	Sandpiper Prairie	47° 14' 32.2"	96° 24' 16.3"	\$ 40,000	Norman	wet-mesic prairie	restore prairie	40		public	DNR-SNA

NOTES:

2015 Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund Proposed Acquisition/Restoration List

SNA Acquisition, Restoration, & Citizen Engagement



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 LCCMR 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 LCCMR program manager for Minnesota ReLeaf.

Forestry Division, Consultant (Oct 1992-April 1995)

Including providing technical assistance for LCCMR-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 LCCMR 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).

