

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

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**Project Title:**

**ENRTF ID: 145-G**

MeCC VIII: Ecological Landscapes - Overall, Mapping and Coordination

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

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**Total Project Budget:** \$ 40,000

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

**Summary:**

Metro Corridors partners will protect at least 692 acres and restore at least 360 acres of strategic ecological landscapes in the metro area. Research, mapping and coordination are also proposed.

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**Name:** John Curry

**Sponsoring Organization:** Minnesota Land Trust

**Address:** 2356 University Ave, Ste 240

St. Paul MN 55114

**Telephone Number:** (651) 647-9590

**Email** jcurry@mnland.org

**Web Address** www.mnland.org

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**Location**

**Region:** Metro

**County Name:** Anoka, Carver, Chisago, Dakota, Goodhue, Hennepin, Isanti, McLeod, Mille Lacs, Ramsey, Rice, Scott, Sherburne, Sibley, Washington, Wright

**City / Township:**

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**Alternate Text for Visual:**

The map shows potential projects for the MeCC 8- Ecological Landscapes proposal.

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



## Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund (ENRTF)

### 2015 Main Proposal

**Project Title:** *MeCC 8 Ecological Landscapes – Overall, Mapping and Coordination*

#### **PROJECT TITLE: MeCC 8 Ecological Landscapes -- Overall, Mapping and Coordination**

##### **I. PROJECT STATEMENT**

The Metro Corridors Partnership (MeCC) has accelerated 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 network of critical lands. These efforts have yielded astounding results. Since 2003, Metro Corridors has:

1. Permanently protected 11,332 acres and over 28 miles of shoreline
2. Restored 9,169 acres and over 9 miles of shoreline
3. Leveraged funding at a ratio of \$3.76 for \$1 from Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund (ENRTF)

MeCC prioritizes projects within key corridors that have been identified through science-based classifications and Geographic Information System (GIS) mapping. Concurrently, the priority corridors were coordinated in collaboration with local, county and watershed plans, the Statewide Conservation and Preservation Plan, and the Minnesota Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy. In 2014, MeCC began the process of modifying its priorities map to include data from the Impaired Waters list and from the Minnesota Land Cover Classification System (MLCCS). These data will drive more exact targeting decisions intended to realize multiple, overlapping benefits for conservation. MeCC is testing the hypothesis that wildlife corridors can be more than just habitat; they can be pillars of healthy ecological landscapes.

Within this 2015 proposal is funding for the continued coordination, outreach, mapping and data sharing that have been hallmarks of the MeCC thus far. These funds include \$20,000 to the Minnesota Land Trust as lead coordinator and \$20,000 as a contracted service for online mapping, data sharing and database management. The second component will be bid out for contract to an entity such as the Minnesota DNR, Minnesota Information Technologies or another organization with the knowledge and capacity to manage existing data and software.

Elsewhere in the 2015 RFP, the LCCMR has received the following MeCC VIII proposals which are submitted in coordination with this proposal:

- *Great River Greening* – \$459,000 to research and field test innovative restoration strategies
- *DNR Fisheries and Wildlife Division* – \$530,000 to acquire 82 acres (classified as ‘Outstanding Regionally Significant Ecological Areas’) along the lower Vermillion River.
- *Minnesota Valley Trust* – \$500,000 to acquire 200 acres of river frontage, floodplain and cropland as prioritized by the U.S Fish and Wildlife Service’s public planning process.
- *Dakota County* – \$600,000 to restore 100 acres and acquire another 140 acres along Dakota County’s rivers, tributaries and creeks.
- *Minnesota Land Trust* – \$882,500 to acquire permanent conservation and establish perpetual stewardship for 220 acres that contribute to strategic ecological landscapes.
- *Trust for Public Land* – \$1,000,000 to acquire 50 acres of high-biodiversity focus areas including those along highly threatened streams, rivers and lakes.
- *Friends of the Mississippi River* – \$276,482 to restore 160 acres of prairie and 100 acres of forestland near or within existing natural areas such as the Grey Cloud Dunes and Sand Coulee SNAs.



**Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund (ENRTF)**

**2015 Main Proposal**

**Project Title:** *MeCC 8 Ecological Landscapes – Overall, Mapping and Coordination*

These proposals, in aggregate, are requesting \$4,287,982 to:

1. Restore and/or enhance over 360 acres of critical ecological landscapes
2. Permanently protect over 692 acres, including fee-title acquisition for public natural resource agencies (360 – 492 acres) and permanent conservation easements (220-460 acres).
3. Research bur oak ecotypes for adaptive management as the climate changes; engage a citizen-science corps of 770 to monitor pollinators in the context of metro prairie restorations; and, evaluate the effectiveness of goat browsing for buckthorn control and other restoration objectives.
4. Leverage an additional \$1,949,000 in conservation funding for important metro area ecological landscapes.

**II. PROJECT ACTIVITIES AND OUTCOMES**

**Activity 1:** *Partnership Coordination, Mapping, and Database Management*

**Budget:** \$40,000

A contracted entity such as Minnesota Information Technology (MN.IT), the Minnesota DNR or another capable organization will manage and update the GIS-based database developed to track MeCC projects as well as review and update the corridor map and other mapping needs of the partnership. The Minnesota Land Trust will provide coordination by convening meetings, providing support to partners, compiling overall reports and accomplishments, and guiding strategic outreach and implementation efforts.

Outcome	Completion Date
1. <i>Convene and facilitate quarterly meetings of the partnership to share information and coordinate work (MLT)</i>	June 30, 2018
2. <i>Compile and submit overall partnership reports twice yearly (MLT)</i>	
3. <i>Conduct outreach to local communities and landowners (MLT)</i>	
4. <i>Maintain current records of accomplishments in the database (Contract: DNR, MN.IT, or other)</i>	

**III. PROJECT STRATEGY**

**A. Project Team/Partners**

- |                               |  |
|-------------------------------|--|
| Great River Greening --       | Restoration for Climate Resilience, Pollinators, Working Lands |
| DNR Fisheries and Wildlife -- | Ecological Landscapes (MN DNR)                                 |
| MN Valley Trust --            | Priority Expansion of the MN Valley National Wildlife Refuge   |
| Dakota County --              | Dakota County Lakeshore and Riparian Protection                |
| Minnesota Land Trust --       | Ecological Landscapes (MLT)                                    |
| Trust for Public Land --      | Strategic Land Protection Program                              |
| Friends of the Mississippi -- | Restoring Prairie and Forest Habitat                           |

**B. Project Impact and Long-Term Strategy**

This project advances the long-term strategy of MeCC, initiated in partnership with the LCCMR in 2003, to accelerate the protection and restoration of critical habitat in the greater Twin Cities metropolitan area. The *Ecological Landscapes* proposal recognizes that habitat investments can play a critical role in many conservation objectives including clean water, access to the outdoors, and specialized habitat for declining, threatened and endangered species.

**C. Timeline Requirements**

The *Ecological Landscapes* project is proposed as three years of the ongoing Metro Conservation Corridors program. Work is anticipated to be completed between July 1, 2015 and June 30, 2018.

## 2015 Detailed Project Budget

**Project Title:** *Metro Conservation Corridors VIII - Mapping and Coordination*

### IV. TOTAL ENRTF REQUEST BUDGET 3 years

<u>BUDGET ITEM</u>	<u>AMOUNT</u>
<b>Personnel: (Wages and Benefits)</b> Minnesota Land Trust conservation and support staff expenses including salaries and benefits (FICA, FUTA, SUI, worker's compensation health insurance, 401(k), etc.) for approximately 0.1 FTE for 2.5 years.	\$ 20,000
<b>Contracts:</b> Enhanced database development and mapping of the corridors will be provided by a contracted entity such as the MN DNR, Minnesota Information Technology (MN.IT) or a different third-party entity capable of working with the existing datasets and online mapping systems.	\$ 20,000
<b>TOTAL ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES TRUST FUND \$ REQUEST =</b>	<b>\$ 40,000</b>

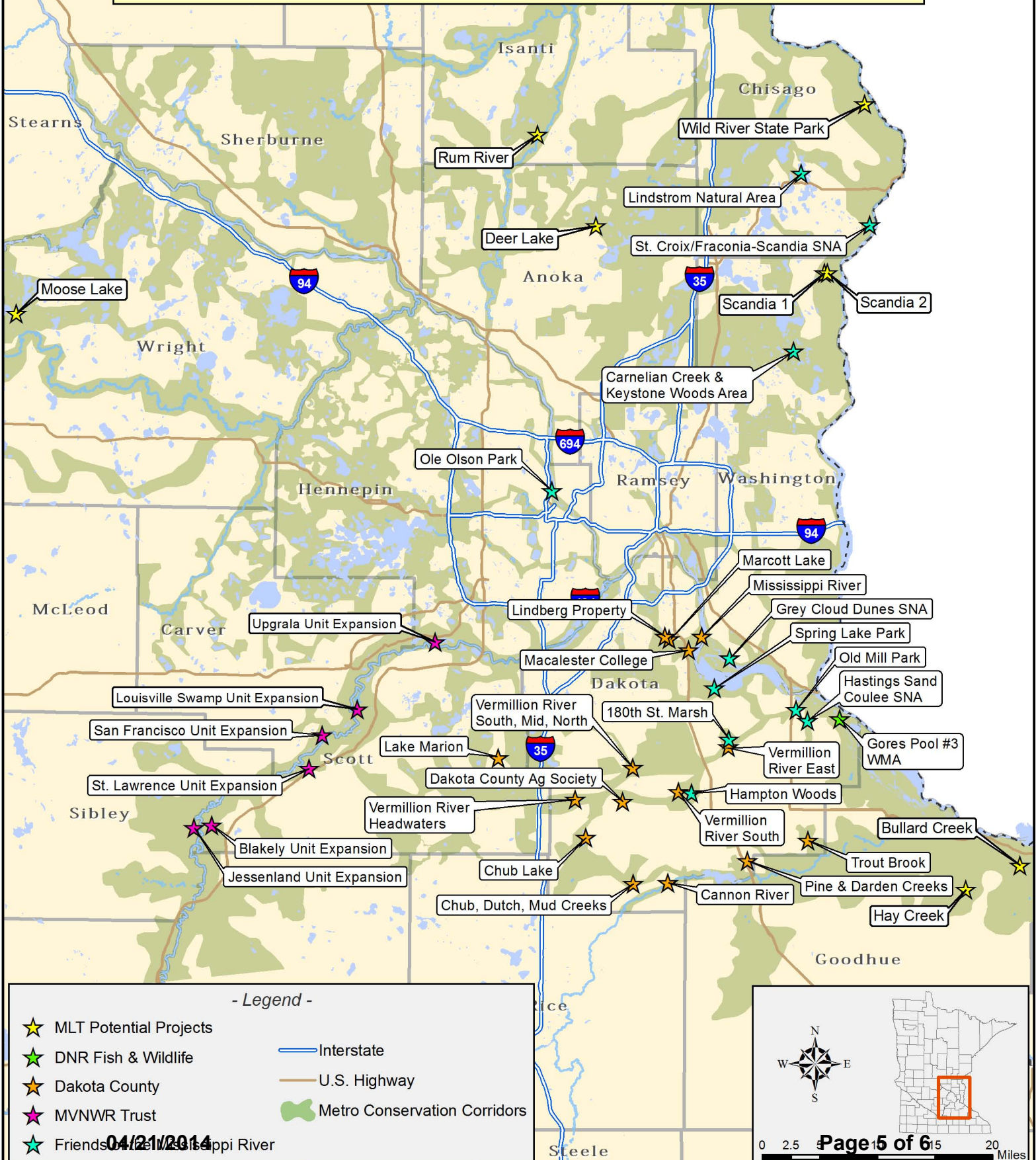
### V. OTHER FUNDS

<u>SOURCE OF FUNDS</u>	<u>AMOUNT</u>	<u>Status</u>
<b>Other Non-State \$ To Be Applied To Project During Project Period:</b>	\$ -	
<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>	\$ -	
<b>Funding History:</b> <i>MeCC 2007: \$165,000; 2008: \$470; 2009: \$100,000; 2010: \$50,000; 2011: \$40,000; 2012: 20,000</i>	\$ -	
<b>Remaining \$ From Current ENRTF Appropriation:</b> <i>MeCC 2011: \$40,000 allocated, \$36,467 unspent. MECC 2012: \$20,000 allocated, \$20,000 unspent.</i>	\$ -	<i>Unspent and partially obligated.</i>

# Metro Conservation Corridors

Phase VIII - 2015

MeCC PARTNER PROJECTS



- Legend -

- ★ MLT Potential Projects
- ★ DNR Fish & Wildlife
- ★ Dakota County
- ★ MVNWR Trust
- ★ Friends of the Mississippi River
- Interstate
- U.S. Highway
- Metro Conservation Corridors

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04/21/2014



# Minnesota Land Trust

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## **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, 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.

With a conservation focus on protecting Minnesota's natural and scenic lands—particularly its renowned lakes, rivers and streams—the Land Trust has completed 462 land protection projects, permanently protecting nearly 44,000 acres and more than 931,000 feet of shoreline.

## **Project Manager Qualifications**

The Minnesota Land Trust employs 14 staff, relies on the skills of nearly 125 dedicated volunteers, and is governed by an active Board of Directors.

John Curry joined the Land Trust staff in March 2013 and currently serves as the Associate Director. John has a bachelor's degree in Government from Saint John's University and a master's degree in Public Administration from Hamline University. He served as the Assistant Director for the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation's Central Office and oversaw grant programs for endangered species, private landowner technical assistance, forest floodplain management and Conservationist of the Year. Mr. Curry has also worked for Audubon Minnesota, the Campaign for Conservation and the Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy.

## ***Other Conservation Staff***

John Brosnan joined the Minnesota Land Trust in January, 2012 as a Project Manager and is responsible for implementing conservation projects. Previously, John spent 5 years as the Baylands Program Manager for the Sonoma Land Trust. He has a Masters of Public Affairs (Hubert H. Humphrey School of Public Affairs) to complement his Bachelor of Science in Natural Resources and the Environment (University of Michigan).

Maggie Karschnia serves as the Land Protection Associate for the Minnesota Land Trust. Maggie joined the Land Trust in 2007 and assists with project development, preparing baseline property reports, and administrative support. Previously she worked for the Minnesota DNR with its SNA Program, restoring native prairie and woodland areas. She has a bachelor's degree in Conservation from the University of Wisconsin.