

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

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**Project Title:**

**ENRTF ID: 148-G**

MeCC VIII: Metro Conservation Corridors 8 Ecological Landscapes

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

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**Total Project Budget:** \$ 882,500

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

**Summary:**

The Minnesota Land Trust will protect critical habitat within the mapped Metro Corridors priority areas by acquiring permanent conservation easements on over 220 acres of strategic ecological landscapes.

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**Name:** John Curry

**Sponsoring Organization:** Minnesota Land Trust

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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 enclosed map includes 8 projects being considered for permanent protection under this grant proposal.

<input type="checkbox"/>	Funding Priorities	<input type="checkbox"/>	Multiple Benefits	<input type="checkbox"/>	Outcomes	<input type="checkbox"/>	Knowledge Base
<input type="checkbox"/>	Extent of Impact	<input type="checkbox"/>	Innovation	<input type="checkbox"/>	Scientific/Tech Basis	<input type="checkbox"/>	Urgency
<input type="checkbox"/>	Capacity Readiness	<input type="checkbox"/>	Leverage	<input type="checkbox"/>	TOTAL		



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

**2015 Main Proposal**

**Project Title:** *Metro Conservation Corridors 8 (MeCC 8) - Ecological Landscapes*

**PROJECT TITLE:** Metro Conservation Corridors 8 (MeCC 8) - Ecological Landscapes

**I. PROJECT STATEMENT**

The Minnesota Land Trust has worked extensively in the greater Twin Cities area since 1992 to permanently protect high-quality nature habitat with an emphasis on private landowner conservation through conservation easements. This strategy has been acknowledged by a variety of stakeholders and plans, including the LCCMR 6-year Strategic Plan and the Statewide Conservation and Preservation Plan, as one of the key tools necessary to achieve land conservation goals in a metropolitan area where escalating land values prohibit fee title acquisition of many priority lands.

The goal of *Ecological Landscapes* is to permanently protect strategic lands that contribute to a regionally connected network of critical habitat within the greater Twin Cities area, promote biodiversity, provide outdoor-based opportunities for metro area children and help maintain water quality of the region's most important rivers, lakes, and streams. To this end, the Land Trust has been incorporating new criteria in its selection methodology, including the Minnesota Land Cover Classification System (MLCCS) and the Impaired Waters data layer into the existing Metro Corridors priorities map. The new data selection criteria will allow the Land Trust to prioritize high-quality habitat that provides multiple benefits such as water quality, scenic beauty, outdoor opportunities, habitat for pollinators and species in greatest conservation need, and potential for high quality restoration via another *Ecological Landscapes* partner organizations.

The Land Trust works only with perpetual conservation easements. These easements prohibit land uses such as row cropping or real estate development that negatively affect important habitat, water quality and other conservation values. In addition, the easements require the land to be managed according to approved habitat management plans and direct the use of native vegetation in conjunction with any required restoration. The Land Trust also will explore the potential for public access with landowners on a case-by-case basis. These easements are monitored annually and enforced as necessary under the Land Trust's comprehensive conservation easement monitoring, management, and enforcement program funded in part through the Stewardship and Enforcement Fund. Grant funds may also be requested for the dedicated Stewardship and Enforcement Fund on a project-by-project basis in accordance with LCCMR-approved policies and procedures. The Land Trust will report to LCCMR annually on the status of the Stewardship and Enforcement Fund and the easements acquired with funds from this grant.

**II. PROJECT ACTIVITIES AND OUTCOMES: Protect Strategic Habitat through Conservation Easements**

**Budget:** \$882,500

The Land Trust will protect critical habitat within the mapped corridors with an emphasis on lands adjacent to public amenities such as parks, trails, rivers and shoreland by: 1) contacting landowners; 2) negotiating and completing permanent conservation easements on 220 acres of land (including documenting property conditions and creating management plans as appropriate); and 3) dedicating funds for the perpetual monitoring, management and enforcement of the easements.

The Land Trust will work primarily with donated easements, purchasing easements when necessary and then at below market value whenever possible. Easement purchases under this program will strive to maximize the donative generosity of landowners—thereby stretching out the state funding further—with a goal of paying no more than 50% of land value in total for all easements. Criteria for determining when a purchase is necessary include landowner ability to donate, connectivity of parcel to other priority lands and waters, and quality of natural resources on the site. Current potential projects are identified on the attached list. New projects will be added as landowners are identified. Potential



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projects will be continually evaluated and those that protect the highest quality habitat and maximize multiple public benefits will be pursued.

Outcome	Completion Date
1. Protect 220 acres by completing conservation easements by identifying and contacting landowners, completing all components of conservation easement projects, and dedicating funds for long-term management, monitoring, and enforcement.	June 30, 2018

**III. PROJECT STRATEGY**

**A. Project Team/Partners**

The Land Trust is the only entity receiving funds through this request, however, the Land Trust coordinates its work with other *MeCC VIII Ecological Landscapes* partners (please see overall proposal for list of project partners) as appropriate. Additionally, the Land Trust partners include private landowners, as well as various units of state and local government that help in identifying and completing potential projects. The *Ecological Landscapes* partners are focused around place-based priorities identified through a scientific GIS process. This process will be further streamlined by incorporating Impaired Waters and MLCCS data in 2014-15 to ensure that focal areas maximize multiple benefits to the metro area’s water, land, wildlife and people.

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

The Land Trust’s project team includes John Curry (Associate Director), John Brosnan (Project Manager), Maggie Karschnia (Land Protection Associate), Gena Setzer (Senior Attorney), Barb Farrell (Staff Paralegal), and Susan MacCallum (Office Administrator).

This project is part of the Land Trust’s long-term, strategic conservation agenda, which sets out the specific conservation focus of the Minnesota Land Trust. This focus includes natural habitats for wildlife, fish and plants, lakeshores, rivers and streams, and scenic landscapes accessible or visible to the public. The conservation agenda also identifies a suite of critical landscapes throughout the State that embody the natural and cultural features that make Minnesota unique. The *MeCC VIII Ecological Landscapes* area is one of the Land Trust’s identified critical landscapes – one that addresses the unique conservation challenges that exist in a largely developed area.

The Minnesota Land Trust has a comprehensive easement monitoring and enforcement program directed at preserving the conservation values of protected lands. With each easement accepted, the Minnesota Land Trust will secure the funds necessary to meet its long-term obligations, setting aside funds for each project as necessary to meet future needs.

**C. Timeline Requirements**

The Land Trust anticipates completing 220 acres or more of strategic conservation easements by June 30, 2018.

## 2015 Detailed Project Budget

**Project Title: Metro Conservation Corridors 8 (MeCC 8) - Ecological Landscapes**

### IV. TOTAL ENRTF REQUEST BUDGET - 3 years

<u>BUDGET ITEM</u>	<u>AMOUNT</u>
<b>Personnel:</b> <i>Approximately .66 FTE/year (2.5 years) plus allowable expenses including conservation staff, legal staff and support staff.</i>	\$ 148,500
<b>Contracts:</b> <i>MLT anticipated contract expenses include Title and Closing, Mapping, Mineral Assessments where appropriate, Appraisals, and Land Surveys. When efficiencies can be gained from contracting legal and/or project management contract support, MLT anticipates pursuing those options as well.</i>	\$ 89,000
<b>Acquisition (Fee Title or Permanent Easements):</b> <i>An estimated 220 acres of permanent easements will be held by the Minnesota Land Trust.</i>	\$ 500,000
<b>Travel:</b> <i>Based on an estimated 20 (200 miles) initial site visits and 12 initiated projects (an additional 1,800 miles) plus meals for 50 days travel.</i>	\$ 5,000
<b>Conservation Easement Stewardship and Enforcement:</b> <i>For each completed project, Minnesota Land Trust invests funding toward the permanent stewardship, monitoring and enforcement of the property. Estimate is based on 7 projects at \$20,000 per project.</i>	\$ 140,000
<b>TOTAL ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES TRUST FUND \$ REQUEST =</b>	<b>\$ 882,500</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> <i>Indicate any additional non-state cash dollars secured or applied for to be spent on the project during the funding period. For each individual sum, list out the source of the funds, the amount, and indicate whether the funds are secured or pending approval.</i>	\$ 500,000	<i>Pending. Landowner Donated Value</i>
<b>Other State \$ To Be Applied To Project During Project Period:</b> <i>Indicate any additional state cash dollars (e.g., bonding, other grants) secured or applied for to be spent on the project during the funding period. For each individual sum, list out the source of the funds, the amount, and indicate whether the funds are secured or pending approval.</i>	\$ -	
<b>In-kind Services To Be Applied To Project During Project Period:</b> <i>Indicate any additional in-kind service(s) secured or applied for to be spent on the project during the project period. For each type of service, list type of service(s), estimated value, and indicate whether it is secured or pending. In-kind services listed must be specific to the project.</i>	\$ -	
<b>Funding History:</b> <i>Indicate funding secured but to be expended prior to July 1, 2015, for activities directly relevant to this specific funding request, including past and current ENRTF funds. State specific source(s) of fund and dollar amount. MECC 2005: \$230,000; MECC 2007: \$134,000; MeCC 2008: \$225,000; MeCC 2009: \$250,000; MeCC 2010: \$485,000; MeCC 2011: \$440,000; MeCC 2012: \$310,000</i>	\$ 2,074,000	
<b>Remaining \$ From Current ENRTF Appropriation:</b> <i>Specify dollar amount and year of appropriation from any current ENRTF appropriation for any directly related project of the project manager or organization that remains unspent or not yet legally obligated at the time of proposal submission. Be as specific as possible. Indicate the status of the funds. MeCC 2011: \$356,333 of \$440,000 appropriated; MeCC 2012: \$300,000 of \$310,000 appropriated.</i>	\$ 656,333	<i>Unspent but partially obligated.</i>

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

**Project Title:** Metro Conservation Corridors 8 (MeCC 8) - Ecological Landscapes

**Project Manager Name:** John Curry

**Organization:** Minnesota Land Trust

**ENRTF \$ Request:** \$882,500

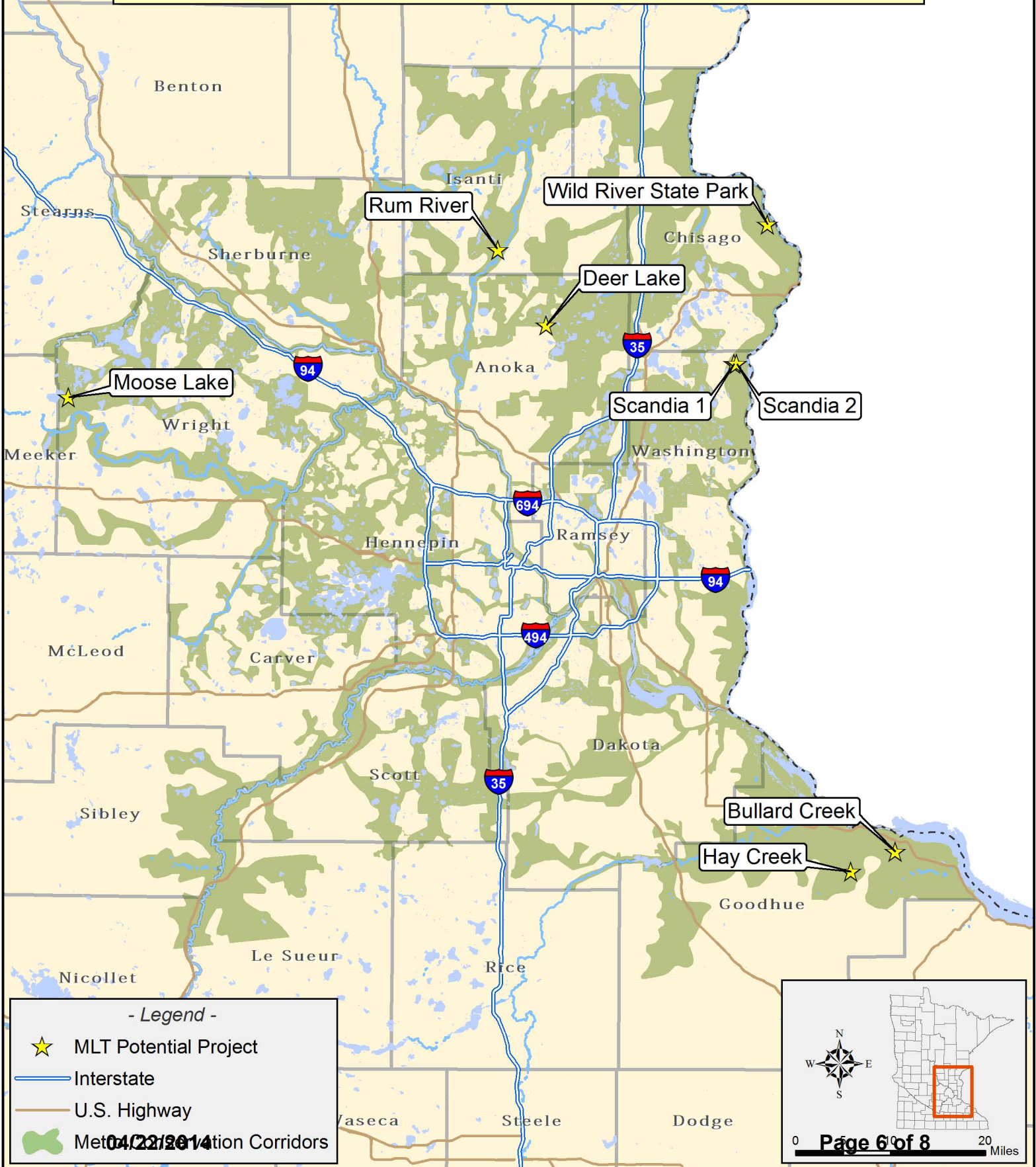
#	Acquisition or Restoration	Geographic Coordinates		Estimated Cost	County	Ecological Significance	Activity Description	# of Acres	# of Shoreline	Type of Landowner	Proposed Fee Title or
		Latitude	Longitude								
1	Deer Lake	93°11'57" W	45°20'11" N	In negotiations. Assessed value = \$104,700	Anoka	Minnesota County Biological Survey native plant communities of oak-maple woodland, northern marsh, hardwood swamp and shrub fen. Contains shoreline along Deer Lake and is adjacent to an existing conservation easement.	conservation easement acquisition	41	0.1	private individual	Minnesota Land Trust
2	Moose Lake	94°13'59" W	45°13'10" N	In negotiations. Assessed value = \$489,500	Wright	Contains forest, wetland, grassland and significant shoreline on Moose Lake. Connects two pieces of Stanelly Eddy Memorial County Park.	conservation easement acquisition	42	0.2	private individual	Minnesota Land Trust
3	Hay Creek	92°32'40" W	44°29'56" N	In negotiations. Assessed value = \$192,800	Goodhue	Minnesota County Biological Survey native plant communities of white-red oak forest and dry bedrock bluff prairie. Contains shoreline along a designated trout stream.	conservation easement acquisition	90	0.2	private individual	Minnesota Land Trust
4	Wild River State Park	92°43'6" W	45°29'24" N	In negotiations. Assessed value = \$446,400	Chisago	Located in close proximity to Wild River State Park, almost entirely forested. Contains native plant communities of red oak- basswood forest. Also adjacent to an existing conservation easement.	conservation easement acquisition	160	N/A	private individual	Minnesota Land Trust
5	Scandia	92°47'28" W	45°16'37" N	In negotiations. Assessed value = \$415,600	Washington	Contains forest, grassland, wetland, and an open water pond. Part of a larger corridor of undeveloped forest and grassland stretching to the St. Croix River which includes three existing conservation easements and Falls Creek SNA.	conservation easement acquisition	40	TBD	private individual	Minnesota Land Trust
6	Scandia	92°47'9" W	45°16'37" N	In negotiations. Assessed Value = \$406,700	Washington	Contains forest, woodland and grassland. Part of a larger corridor of undeveloped forest and grassland stretching to the St. Croix River which includes three existing conservation easements and Falls Creek SNA.	conservation easement acquisition	40	N/A	private individual	Minnesota Land Trust
7	Rum River	93°18'16" W	45°27'05" N	In negotiations. Assessed value = \$128,000	Anoka	Contains forested acres, woodland and grasslands. Adjacent to land previously protected with a conservation easement.	conservation easement acquisition	32	N/A	private individual	Minnesota Land Trust
8	Bullard Creek	92°26'56" W	44°31'45" N	In negotiations. Assessed value = \$658,300	Goodhue	Deciduous forest and scenic bluffs along Flower Valley Trail.	conservation easement acquisition	94	N/A	private individual	Minnesota Land Trust
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04/22/2014  
NOTES:

# Metro Conservation Corridors

Phase VIII - 2015

MINNESOTA LAND TRUST POTENTIAL PROJECTS



- Legend -

★ MLT Potential Project

— Interstate

— U.S. Highway

■ Metro Conservation Corridors

04/22/2014

North arrow and scale bar (0 to 20 Miles). Inset map of Minnesota showing the location of the study area.



# 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.

