

**Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund
2018 Request for Proposals (RFP)**

Project Title:

ENRTF ID: 203-G

Private Native Prairie Conservation through Native Prairie Bank

Category: G. Land Acquisition, Habitat and Recreation

Total Project Budget: \$ 2,477,000

Proposed Project Time Period for the Funding Requested: 3 years, July 2018 to June 2021

Summary:

Native Prairie Bank will help landowners conserve native prairie through outreach to 10,000 landowners and practitioners, restoration and enhancement of 870 acres, and protection of 600 acres through conservation easements.

Name: Judy Schulte

Sponsoring Organization: MN DNR

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Location

Region: Central, Northwest, Southwest, Southeast

County Name: Statewide

City / Township:

Alternate Text for Visual:

Map: Native Prairie Bank protection will be targeted at 600 acres of high quality native prairie within MN Prairie Conservation Plan and Southeast MN priority areas. Photo 1: Native prairie being destroyed in the fall of 2016 via rock removal. Photos 2-4: Examples of species impacted by the loss of native prairie. Pictured are Greater Prairie Chicken, Monarch Butterfly and Western Foxsnake.

_____ 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)

2018 Main Proposal

Project Title: *Private Native Prairie Conservation through Native Prairie Bank*

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I. PROJECT STATEMENT

Native Prairie Bank (NPB) has a proven track record of working with landowners to enhance and protect native prairie while leaving the land in private ownership. Through this proposal, prairie technical assistance will be provided to landowners and practitioners including a new “Prairie Landowner Network” created to increase cooperation among prairie landowners. Native Prairie Tax Exemption online tools will be completed to make enrollment for landowners easier. Native prairie restoration and enhancement activities will be implemented on about 355 acres of NPBs. Permanent protection of about 300 acres will take place through the acquisition of NPB conservation easements with priority given to high quality prairie identified by the Minnesota Biological Survey (MBS). The current landowner “waiting list” for NPB conservation easements includes over 97 projects for over 6400 acres with an estimated value of \$16,770,000. Native prairie is a fragile, unique natural resource that consists of thousands of different organisms, plants, animals, bacteria and soil fungi. Their complex interactions provide the food, water and shelter required by many of Minnesota’s rare, threatened and endangered species. Threats to native prairie are widespread including cropland conversion, mining, development, invasive species, woody encroachment and non-prairie focused land use/management. Based on the most recent statistics compiled for the 5-year update of the MN Prairie Conservation Plan, MBS has now identified about 249,000 acres of remaining native prairie in Minnesota including approximately 115,000 acres that is unprotected from destruction.

II. PROJECT ACTIVITIES AND OUTCOMES

Activity 1: Prairie Landowner Assistance, Outreach and Existing NPB Stewardship Budget: \$527,358

Private landowners and other practitioners will increase their stewardship of native prairie a result of this project’s workshops, field days, one-on-one consultations, etc. A Prairie Landowner Network will be established in cooperation with Conservation Corps of Minnesota (CCM) as a new innovative way to connect prairie landowners through social media, email, newsletters, training opportunities, etc. This network is aimed at improving prairie quality on private lands by keeping landowners up-to-date on the best management strategies. At least 20 landowners will receive a comprehensive prairie stewardship plan that will provide specific prairie management expertise for their property. Complete second and final stage of the Native Prairie Tax Exemption web app. About 5 baseline property reports and 34 monitoring visits will be completed on existing NPBs to evaluate current conditions and insure easement compliance.

Outcome	Completion Date
3a. ~4 workshops/field days for prairie landowners & practitioners (~250 people)	6/30/2021
3b. consultations, guidance, mgmt. asst., etc. to ~40 landowners	6/30/2021
3c. ~20 enrollees in Prairie Landowner Network	6/30/2021
3d. ~20 prairie stewardship plans provided to prairie landowners (~1500 acres)	6/30/2021
3e. Complete Stage 2 of Native Prairie Tax Exemption web-app.	6/30/2021
3f. ~5 baseline property reports for NPB easements	6/30/2021
3g. monitoring and stewardship of ~ 34 NPB easements	6/30/2021

Activity 2: 355 Acres of Native Prairie Habitat Enhancement & Restoration Budget: \$708,165

Restoration and enhancement activities will be completed on about 355 acres. Activities include seed collection, site preparation, planting, invasive species control, woody species removal, boundary signing, site cleanup, prescribed burns (or alternative prescribed disturbance, such as haying, mowing or grazing, where appropriate) and monitoring. All restorations will use seeds/plants of local ecotypes, collected from onsite or within 30 miles. Adaptive Management Monitoring will occur at 8 NPB sites to evaluate whether the objectives of management



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were met and to contribute to future management decisions. Restoration and enhancement activities will be carried out via landowner agreements, DNR staff, CCM, volunteers, and/or contractors.

Outcome	Completion Date
2a. ~25 acres of prairie reconstruction (restoration)	6/30/2021
2b. ~210 acres of woody removal & invasive species treatment	6/30/2021
2c. ~ 120 acres of prescribed burns	6/30/2021
2d. NPB easement boundary signs & development work on ~7 NPB sites	6/30/2021
2e. adaptive management monitoring on ~8 NPB sites	6/30/2021

Activity 3: Acquisition and Stewardship of 300 acres of Native Prairie Bank Easements Budget: \$1,241,477

DNR-administered permanent NPB conservation easements will be acquired on about 300 acres of high quality native prairie, which will include no more than 30% non-prairie as necessary to improve prairie management. Payment rates are determined by authorizing law, M.S. 84.96, as applied according to policies of the Department of Natural Resources and the Board of Water and Soils Resources. Conservation easement baseline reports will be completed on all approximately 7 NPBs acquired. Priority sites are identified by MBS which target rare and endangered plant and animal species, high quality plant communities, and key habitats for Species in Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN). If needed, restoration will be completed using a combination of funds from Activity 2 above and/or other state appropriations. Only about 15 of the 300 acres acquired are expected to need restoration. Funding will be deposited into a conservation easement stewardship account dedicated to perpetual monitoring and enforcement on NPB easements acquired with this proposal.

Outcome	Completion Date
1a. acquisition of about 300 acres NPB conservation easements	6/30/2021
1b. ~7 baseline property reports for NPB easements	6/30/2021
1c. dollars deposited into conservation easement stewardship account (~7 easements)	6/30/2021

III. PROJECT STRATEGY

A. Project Team/Partners

Landowner outreach will be coordinated with Minnesota Prairie Conservation Plan partners and Local Technical Teams. The teams of staff from SWCD's, NRCS, DNR, USFWS, TNC, Pheasants Forever, etc., cultivate relationships with prairie landowners and bring new potential NPB parcels to DNR prairie staff for further evaluation. This appropriation will not be used to fund activities of partners.

B. Project Impact and Long-Term Strategy

Currently, DNR holds 11,600 acres of NPB easements, which accounts for 40% of the MBS mapped native prairie protected through conservation easements statewide. If NPB aimed to protect 40% of the Minnesota Prairie Conservation Plan native prairie easement protection goals, NPB would need to acquire an additional 44,000 acres. At the same time, without active natural resource management prairie values will be lost. Thus NPB could utilize ENRTF support of about \$5M per year to sustain and protect native prairie.

C. Timeline Requirements

Three years (July 1, 2018 through June 30, 2021) provides adequate time for acquisition negotiation and outreach activities in addition to multiple field seasons for restoration and enhancement activities.

2018 Detailed Project Budget

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IV. TOTAL ENRTF REQUEST BUDGET 3 years

BUDGET ITEM	AMOUNT
Personnel: 5.4 FTE (for 2 years) for direct project activities spread across ~13 classified & unclassified staff paid almost exclusively through grants (e.g. LCCMR, LSOHC, etc.), including ~15-25% fringe benefits as per state union contracts: 0.4 FTE (for 2 years) acquisition & management coordinators and prairie biologist (~\$79,474) 3.7 FTE (for 2 years) specialists & technicians (~\$508,900) 1.3 FTE (for 2 years) laborers & seasonal crews (~\$97,500)	\$ 685,874
Professional/Technical/Service Contracts: <i>Professional/technical/conservation</i> adaptive management monitoring & private prairie stewardship plan MN: Prairie Landowner Network (1 individual placement), prescribed burning, invasives, woody removal and seed harvest (crew contracts) <i>Service contracts:</i> prescribed burning, invasives, woody removal, seed harvest For all contracts, priority is given to CCM and contractors will be selected following state procurement & bidding processes	\$ 461,500
Equipment/Tools/Supplies: materials, baseline property report printing (\$5,500) Activity 2: herbicide, posts, signs, safety supplies, equipment repair/parts, seed cleaning/testing, field tools, enclosure fence for monitoring (\$27,500) Activity 3: Deed & baseline property report printing, field tools (\$300)	Activity 1: Outreach 33,300
Acquisition (Fee Title or Permanent Easements): DNR Native Prairie Bank conservation easement acquisition (300 acres) including real estate transaction costs	\$ 890,000
Travel: DNR fleet charges (for operation of trucks, cars, tractors, and other specialized equipment) & instate travel costs (as per state contracts)	\$ 170,429
Additional Budget Item: Conservation Easement Stewardship account	\$ 140,000
Additional Budget Item: MNIT Services for Prairie Tax Exemption Database includes county assessor access	-\$ 15,000
Additional Budget Item: <i>DNR's Direct & Necessary Costs</i> (\$80,897) pay for activities that are directly related to and necessary for accomplishing appropriated programs/projects. Direct and necessary costs cover HR support (~\$16,122), Safety Support (~\$3,704), Financial Support (~\$15,974), Communication support(~\$6,353), IT Support (~\$33,385), and Planning Support (~\$5,359).	\$ 80,897
TOTAL ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES TRUST FUND \$ REQUEST =	\$ 2,477,000

V. OTHER FUNDS (This entire section must be filled out. Do not delete rows. Indicate "N/A" if row is not applicable.)

SOURCE OF FUNDS	AMOUNT	Status
Other Non-State \$ To Be Applied To Project During Project Period:	\$ -	NA
Other State \$ To Be Applied To Project During Project Period: Some NPB acquisition and management projects are funded with a combination of state appropriations (e.g. OHF and RIM). If any activities are split funded their accomplishment acres will be pro-rated.	\$ -	NA
In-kind Services To Be Applied To Project During Project Period: DNR office facilities, supervisor-manager time & other support will be provided (but contributions not tracked)	\$ -	NA
Past and Current ENRTF Appropriation: ENRTF 2013 Prairie Stewardship and NPB Acquisition (\$750,000)-Completed ENRTF 2015 Prairie Stewardship and NPB Acquisition (\$3,325,000)-Balance:\$282,261 encumbered & \$2,114,299 unexpended (6 easement set to close by 6/30/2017). ENRTF 2017 Prairie Stewardship and NPB Acquisition (\$2,675,000)-Balance: \$2,669,178 unexpended	\$6,750,000	Spent: \$1,684,262 Legally obligated: \$282,261 Unspent: \$4,783,477
Other Funding History: OHF 2013 Prairie Restoration & Enhancement (NPB portion=\$96,000)-Balance:\$14,034 OHF 2013 SNA & NPB Acquisition (NPB portion=\$753,000)-Completed OHF 2014 Prairie Restoration & Enhancement (NPB portion=\$210,500)-Balance: \$56,653 OHF 2014 NPB-RIM Acquisition (NPB portion=\$3,000,000)-Balance: \$111,981 OHF 2015 Prairie Restoration & Enhancement (NPB portion=\$125,000)-Balance:\$66,651 OHF 2015 Accelerated Native Prairie Protection (\$3,740,000)-Balance: \$2,393,736 OHF 2016 Accelerated Native Prairie Protection (\$2,541,000)-Balance:\$2,531,933 OHF 2016 Prairie Restoration & Enhancement (NPB Portion=\$215,000)-Balance:\$84,723 OHF 2017 Accelerated Native Prairie Protection (\$2,481,000)Balance:\$2,480,997 OHF 2017 Prairie Restoration & Enhancement (NPB Portion=\$27,000)-Balance:\$126,800	#####	Spent: \$5,320,992 Unspent (includes legally obligated): \$7,967,508

Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund
2018 Proposed Acquisition/Restoration List

Project Title: Private Native Prairie Conservation through Native Prairie Bank

Project Manager Name: Judy Schulte

Organization: MN DNR-SNA

ENRTF \$ Request: \$2,477,000

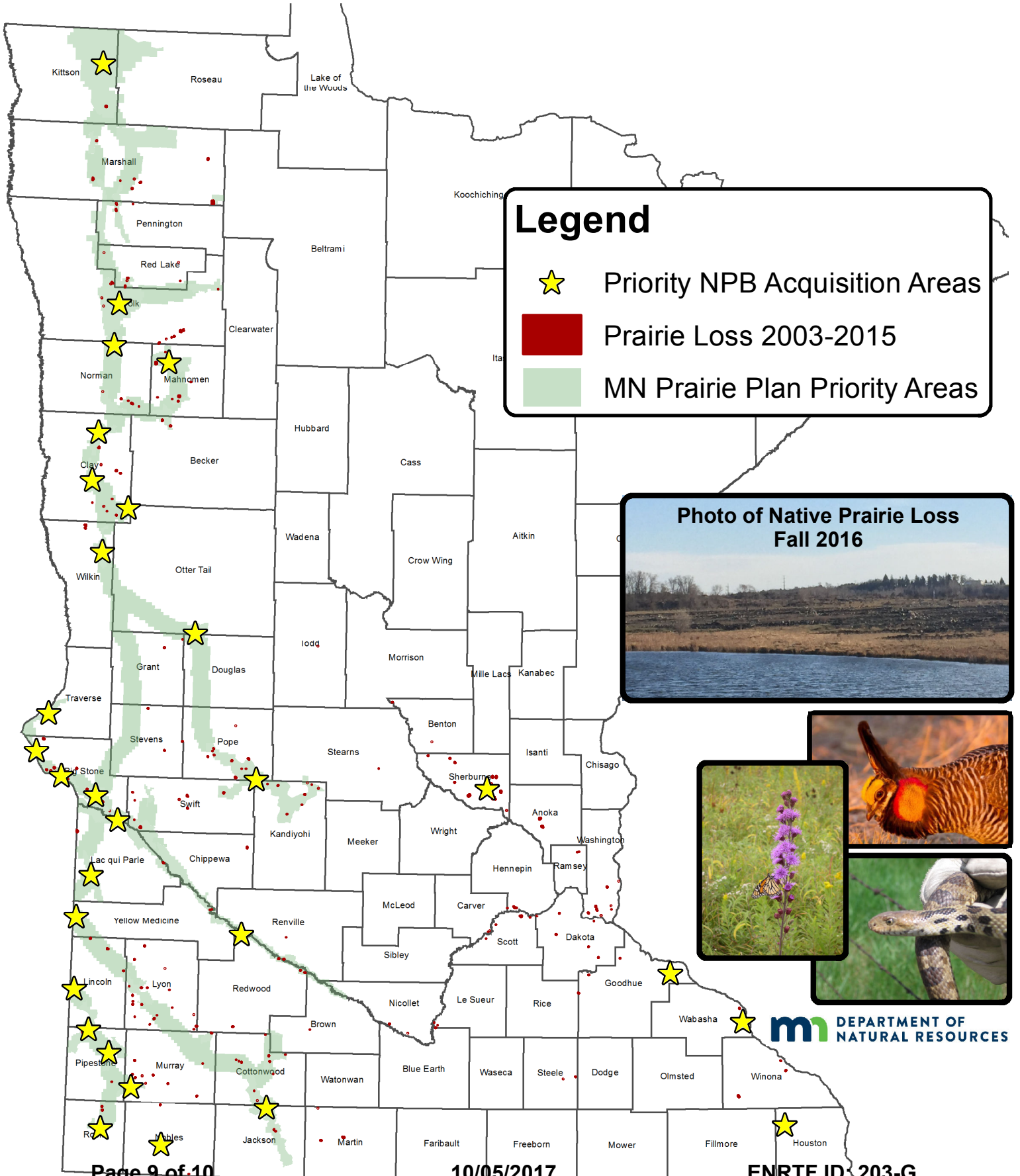
#	Acquisition or Restoration Parcel Name	Geographic Coordinates Format: [Deg.]° [Min.]' [Sec.]" [Hemis.]		Estimated Cost	County	Ecological Significance	Activity Description	# of Acres	# of Shoreline Miles	Type of Landowner	Proposed Fee Title or Easement Holder (if applicable)
		Latitude	Longitude								
1	Chanarambie Creek Prairies	43° 55' 12.9"	96° 1' 8.0"	\$2800/ac	Murray, Pipestone	Dry gravel, mesic & wet prairies in biggest grassland complex with the highest quality prairie parcels in SW MN	Conservation easement acquisition	80		Private	DNR-SNA
2	Lac Qui Parle Prairies	43° 12' 10.4"	96° 10' 32.1"	\$2300/ac	Big Stone, Lac Que Parle	Next to existing DNR and TNC protected native prairies, part of a large macro site with many native prairie tracts; expands habitat for many rare butterfly and bird species, as well as Prairie Chickens	Conservation easement acquisition	200		Private	DNR-SNA
3	Antelope Hills Prairie	44° 56' 0.5"	96° 20' 29.8"	\$2300/ac	Lac Qui Parle	Mixture of dry hill, sand-gravel, mesic and wet prairies. Expands habitat for many rare plant and bird species	Conservation easement acquisition	160		Private	DNR-SNA
4	Glacial Lakes & Moraine Prairie	45° 25' 20.0"	95° 14' 34.5"	\$2500/ac	Pope, Kandiyohi, Swift, Stearns	Dry sand-gravel prairies of the Alexandria Moraine, provides habitat for the Threatened Dakota Skipper as well as the Poweshiek Skipper and Regal Fritillary	Conservation easement acquisition	150		Private	DNR-SNA
5	Prairie Coteau/Rock River Prairies	44° 4' 59.4"	96° 10' 23.8"	\$2600/ac	Pipestone	Dry hill prairie, prairie meadow, wet prairie, rare species; part of a large, contiguous prairie macrosite, expands habitat around the Prairie Coteau SNA	Conservation easement acquisition	150		Private	DNR-SNA

6	Hole-in-the-Mountain Prairies	44° 11' 36.9"	96° 19' 1.8"	\$2600/ac	Pipestone, Lincoln	Dry hill prairie, prairie meadow, wet prairie, rare species; part of a large, contiguous prairie macrosite, expands habitat around existing TNC and DNR lands	Conservation easement acquisition	150		Private	DNR-SNA
7	Shakotan Prairies	44° 23' 1.9"	96° 25' 25.4"	\$2600/ac	Lincoln	Dry hill prairie, prairie meadow, wet prairie, rare species; part of a large, contiguous prairie macrosite	Conservation easement acquisition	150		Private	DNR-SNA
8	Upper MN River Prairies	44° 40' 21.2"	95° 19' 2.0"	\$2900/ac	Chippewa, Yellow Medicine, Renville, Redwood	MN River Valley native prairie including oak savanna, wet prairie, rock outcrops; expands habitat for many rare plants, butterflies and birds	Conservation easement acquisition	200		Private	DNR-SNA
9	Yellow Medicine Coteau Prairie	44° 43' 42.7"	96° 25' 47.0"	\$2500/ac	Yellow Medicine	Dry hill prairie, prairie meadow, wet prairie, rare species; part of a large, contiguous prairie macrosite, expands habitat for Western White Prairie Clover and Upland Sandpiper	Conservation easement acquisition	160		Private	DNR-SNA
10	Des Moines River Valley	43° 50' 31.2"	95° 7' 7.6"	\$3000/ac	Cottonwood, Jackson	Des Moines River Valley native prairie including oak savanna, dry hill prairie; expands habitat for many, butterflies, birds and rare plants - including Prairie Bush Clover.	Conservation easement acquisition	100		Private	DNR-SNA
11	Blue Mounds/Touch-The-Sky Prairies	43° 43' 16.2"	96° 12' 43.3"	\$4000/Ac	Rock	Mesic to wet prairie with rock outcrops; provides habitat for many rare rock outcrop plants	Conservation easement acquisition	80		Private	DNR-SNA
12	Big Stone Moraines	45° 19' 7.5"	96° 20' 2.4"	\$1800/ac	Big Stone	Prairie meadow, wet prairie, rare species; part of a large, contiguous prairie macrosite, expands habitat for many rare species as well as Prairie Chickens	Conservation easement acquisition	200		Private	DNR-SNA

13	Big Stone Lake Prairie (north & south)	45° 25' 33.7"	96° 40' 41.0"	\$1800/Ac	Big Stone	Dry Hill, mesic and wet prairies along Big Stone Lake next to DNR state park and SNA parcels	Conservation easement acquisition	80		Private	DNR-SNA
14	Rothsay Prairies	46° 29' 27.0"	96° 21' 23.4"	\$1600/ac	Wilkin	Prairie meadow, wet prairie, rare species; part of a large, contiguous prairie macrosite, expands habitat for many rare species as well as Prairie Chickens	Conservation easement acquisition	160		Private	DNR-SNA
15	Glacial Ridge Prairies	47° 41' 46.9"	96° 18' 43.9"	\$1600/ac	Polk	Prairie meadow, wet prairie, rare species; part of a large, contiguous prairie macrosite, expands habitat for many rare species as well as Prairie Chickens	Conservation easement acquisition	160		Private	DNR-SNA
16	Felton Prairies	47° 3' 48.0"	96° 24' 53.7"	\$1800/ac	Clay	Prairie meadow, wet prairie, rare species; part of a large, contiguous prairie macrosite, expands habitat for many rare species as well as Prairie Chickens	Conservation easement acquisition	100		Private	DNR-SNA
17	Lake Christina Hills Prairies	46° 6' 33.3"	95° 41' 33.8"	\$1800/ac	Ottertail, Douglas, Grant	Dry Hill to wet prairies; part of the rolling topography of the Alexandria moraine	Conservation easement acquisition	80		Private	DNR-SNA
18	Sherburne Sands Prairies	45° 23' 40.7"	93° 39' 49.8"	\$1600/ac	Sherburne	A mosaic of prairie, wetlands and oak savanna set in an important transition zone	Conservation easement acquisition	80		Private	DNR-SNA
19	Frontenac Hay Creek Bluffs	44° 30' 20.5"	92° 25' 6.1"	\$2600/ac	Goodhue	Southern dry bedrock bluff (goat) prairies in a complex of bluff prairies and cold streams	Conservation easement acquisition	40		Private	DNR-SNA
20	Kellogg-Weaver Dunes Prairies	44° 16' 10.6"	91° 56' 2.8"	\$2500/ac	Wabasha, Winona	Rolling sand dune topography, mature dunes with dry, mesic, or wet prairie as well as oak savanna	Conservation easement acquisition	40		Private	DNR-SNA
21	Root River Valley Prairies	43° 46' 14.6"	91° 39' 51.8"	\$2400/ac	Houston, Filmore, Winona	Southern Dry Bedrock Bluff (goat) prairies in a complex of bluff prairies and cold streams; habitat for timber rattlesnakes	Conservation easement acquisition	40		Private	DNR-SNA

22	Lake Bronson and Aspen Parkland Prairies	48° 50' 39.1"	96° 30' 53.5"	\$1000/ac	Kittson, Roseau, Marshall	Aspen parkland complex-many prairie dominated aspen complexes are succeeding to woodland in absence of fire	Conservation easement acquisition	200		Private	DNR-SNA
23	Agassiz Dunes	47° 29' 8.3"	96° 20' 14.3"	\$1,800/ac	Polk, Norman	Dry barrens oak savanna-rare prairie plant community in northern MN	Conservation easement acquisition	150		Private	DNR-SNA
24	Wambach Santee Prairie	47° 24' 55.7"	95° 56' 36.3"	\$1,000/ac	Mahnomen	Prairie meadow complexes, prairie rich fens and other rare northern plant communities	Conservation easement acquisition	150		Private	DNR-SNA
25	Blanket Flower Prairies	46° 42' 5.4"	96° 11' 37.1"	\$1500/ac	Clay, Becker, Otter Tail	Dry Sand-gravel prairie in Alexandria Moraine and Hardwood Hills subsection	Conservation easement acquisition	200		Private	DNR-SNA
26	Blue Stem Prairie	46° 49' 50.0"	96° 26' 56.0"	\$1800/ac	Clay	Mesic, wet meadow/carr, & wet prairie parcels intermixed with DNR SNA and Audobon preserves	Conservation easement acquisition	80		Private	DNR-SNA
27	Lake Traverse Prairies	45° 42' 2.0"	96° 40' 48.2"	\$2000/ac	Traverse	Dry prairie and prairie-woodland complex	Conservation easement acquisition	150		Private	DNR-SNA
<p>NOTES: NPB acquisition will be targeted at high quality native prairie parcels in the areas listed above. These are named Prairie Core Areas identified in the 2010 MN Prairie Conservation Plan, plus priority areas in SE MN. Restoration will occur on newly acquired and existing NPB sites. When identified, specific restoration parcels will be added to the work plan parcel list.</p>											

2018 Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund Private Native Prairie Conservation through Native Prairie Bank (NPB) Proposed Easement Acquisition Sites



PROGRAM MANAGER QUALIFICATIONS

Project Manager: Judy Schulte, Prairie Biologist
Affiliation: Department of Natural Resources, Scientific and Natural Areas (SNA)
Mailing Address: 1241 East Bridge Street, Redwood Falls, MN 56283
Telephone No.: (507) 822-0344
E-mail: judy.schulte@dnr.state.mn.us

Judy Schulte is the Scientific and Natural Area Program's Prairie Biologist. The SNA Program's mission is to "preserve and perpetuate the ecological diversity of Minnesota's natural heritage, including landforms, fossil remains, plant and animal communities, rare and endangered species, or other biotic features and geological formations, for scientific study and public edification as components of a healthy environment". Judy is responsible for coordinating and administering programs designed to improve native prairie conservation and management on private lands and oversight of conservation easement stewardship. She provides programmatic direction and management for Native Prairie Bank, Native Prairie Tax Exemption, and Prairie Stewardship Planning Assistance. She has been involved with the implementation and management of several previous LCCMR & LSOHC projects, including:

- ML 2010 ENRTF Scientific and Natural Areas & Native Prairie Restoration, Enhancement & Acquisition
- ML 2011, 2013, 2015 & 2017 ENRTF Native Prairie Stewardship & Native Prairie Bank Acquisition
- ML 2011, 2013 & 2014 ENRTF Scientific and Natural Areas Acquisition and Restoration
- ML2010-2017 OHF Accelerated Prairie Restoration & Enhancement of DNR Lands
- ML2011-2013 OHF WMA, SNA & NPB Easement Acquisition
- ML2014-2017 OHF Accelerated Native Prairie Bank Protection

Judy has served as the Prairie Biologist with the SNA program since March of 2015. Other related experiences include:

Region 4 Prairie Specialist, MN DNR (2011-2015) regional lead for Native Prairie Bank easement acquisition and enhancement work, Prairie Tax Exemption, Prairie Stewardship Planning Assistance and general private prairie land technical assistance.

District Technician, Redwood Soil & Water Conservation District (2009-2011) Provided outreach, acquisition and management support to landowners and operators in Redwood County for a variety of county, state and federal conservation programs.

Program Technician, USDA Redwood County Farm Service Agency (2007-2009) Program Technician responsible for the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) and Grassland Reserve Program (GRP) for Redwood County.

Education: Graduated from South Dakota State University in 2007 with a Bachelor of Science in Park Management & Horticulture.

Judy will provide overall management to this proposed LCCMR project. She has effectively demonstrated her capacity to manage programs and budgets, maintain accurate records, and direct staff. Judy has experience and has demonstrated the ability to collaborate with a wide range of internal and external stakeholders in addressing complicated and contentious prairie protection and management issues. She is organizationally driven and has the knowledge and background to get the work done on the ground.

Organization Description: Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, Division of Ecological & Water Resources, Scientific & Natural Areas Program

Charged under MS 86A.05 to protect and perpetuate in and undisturbed natural state those natural features that possess exceptional scientific or education value; and under MS 84.96 and 84.961 to acquire Native Prairie Bank easements and work with landowners in conserving native prairie.