

**Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund
2020 Request for Proposals (RFP)**

Project Title:

ENRTF ID: 261-G

DNR Scientific and Natural Areas

Category: G. Land Acquisition for Habitat and Recreation

Sub-Category:

Total Project Budget: \$ 5.875.000

Proposed Project Time Period for the Funding Requested: June 30, 2023 (3 yrs)

Summary:

Scientific and Natural Area (SNA) habitat restoration and improvements (1000+ acres), increased public involvement and strategic acquisition (500+ acres) will conserve Minnesota's most unique and rare resources for everyone's benefit.

Name: Judy Schulte

Sponsoring Organization: MN DNR

Job Title: _____

Department: Division of Ecological and Water Resources

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Web Address: mndnr.gov/snas

Location:

Region: Statewide

County Name: Statewide

City / Township:

Alternate Text for Visual:

Map-SNA restoration priorities are located in existing/proposed SNAs across the state and the acquisition priorities are located in Conservation Opportunity Areas. Photo-Boy holding a frog on an SNA.

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



PROJECT TITLE: DNR Scientific and Natural Areas

I. PROJECT STATEMENT

The unique and vital role of state Scientific and Natural Areas (SNAs) will be increased through wildlife habitat restoration and enhancement, increased public involvement, and strategic acquisition. About 1000 acres of native habitat restoration, enhancement, and site improvement activities will be targeted at SNAs threatened by invasive species and lack of natural disturbance regimes and to provide nature-based recreation. In cooperation with Conservation Corp of Minnesota (CCM), outreach and citizen science actions will result in public participation at 80 SNA events and a network of volunteer site stewards at 130 SNAs. About 500 acres will be strategically acquired from willing sellers and designated as SNAs to protect at risk native plant communities and wildlife habitat of state significance identified by the Minnesota Biological Survey (MBS) and the SNA Strategic Land Protection Plan.

II. PROJECT ACTIVITIES AND OUTCOMES

Activity 1: Native Habitat Restoration, Enhancements and Improvements on 1000 acres

Native habitat restoration and site improvement activities will be completed on about 1000 acres at about 50 SNAs. Management plans will be completed for about 10 SNAs (including sites acquired through these funds). About 50 SNAs will be monitored to improve management and track changes to rare species, imperiled plant communities and other important protected features. SNA staff will provide ecological/technical guidance and on-site verification for 6 projects implemented by partners on SNAs. Restoration and improvement activities will be carried out by DNR staff, CCM, Sentence to Service, volunteers, and/or contractors. Activities include seed collection, site preparation, planting and aftercare, invasive species early detection, control and removal, site clean-up, signing, interpretive kiosks, fencing, and prescribed burns (or alternative prescribed disturbance, such as prescribed haying, mowing or grazing, necessary where use of fire is limited). This activity includes work to bring acquired parcels up to DNR’s minimum standards and includes restoration and improvements of acquired sites if ecologically advisable and feasible within the appropriation period.

ENRTF BUDGET: \$1,764,045

Outcome	Completion Date
1a. ~20 acres of restoration of forest, prairie, & outcrop sites	06/30/2022
1b. ~380 acres of woody removal & invasive species treatment	06/30/2022
1c. ~600 acres of prescribed burns	06/30/2022
1d. ~5 SNA interpretive kiosks installed AND development work on ~20 sites	06/30/2022
1e. ecological/technical guidance for ~6 partnership projects	06/30/2022
1f. management plans completed for ~10 SNAs	06/30/2022
1g. adaptive management, ecological & conservation easement monitoring on ~50 SNAs	06/30/2022

Activity 2: Public Engagement, Outreach & Citizen Science in Natural Areas

Minnesotans will be involved in volunteer habitat conservation and education activities on SNAs and in the conservation of other key natural areas. A network of 130 SNA volunteer site stewards who help care for SNAs will be sustained and 80+ events organized and executed (volunteer work days, recreation-educational events, guided nature hikes, citizen science monitoring, bio-blitzes, etc.). New and refined electronic/social media communications tools, maps and interpretive information will be developed and disseminated to advance the public’s understanding of Minnesota’s wild places and biodiversity and to enhance nature-based recreational use of SNAs. Natural Area Registry agreements will be established on about 2 biodiversity significance sites to promote conservation of natural areas owned by others.



**Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund (ENRTF)
2020 Main Proposal
DNR Scientific and Natural Areas**

Minnesota has an opportunity to co-host the 2021 Natural Areas Conference in Duluth. If held in Minnesota, this traveling national conference would bring natural resource professionals from across the nation and globe to Minnesota to share new research, evaluate best management practices and develop on-going connections. The Natural Areas Association (NAA), a national, non-profit dedicated to the support and advancement of the community of natural areas practitioners, would be the fiscal agent and coordinate all logistical needs (DNR would not generate any income). This request would simply allow SNA to provide and present expertise on Minnesota’s natural areas and resources to the NAA and conference attendees.

ENRTF BUDGET: \$728,368

Outcome	Completion Date
2a. SNA website, e-book, social media, maps & other interpretive info	06/30/2022
2b. ~ 80 citizen science & volunteer events (management work days & ed. events)	06/30/2022
2c. network of volunteer site stewards at ~130 SNAs	06/30/2022
2d. ~2 Natural Area Registry agreements to conserve biodiversity significance sites	06/30/2022
2e. SNA sites and rare features highlighted at 2021 Natural Areas Conference through field trips, presentations and displays	06/30/2022

Activity 3: Strategic Acquisition of Sites with Biodiversity Significance – 500 acres

Acquisition and designation of ~500 acres as state SNAs will protect and buffer the most important MBS sites of biodiversity significance. Proactive landowner contacts will target SNA Strategic Plan priority areas, including MN Prairie Conservation Plan priority areas. Acquired sites must be recommended through an Ecological Evaluation report and numerically evaluated to insure prioritization of MBS biodiversity significance sites that are predominantly MBS native plant communities with habitat for rare, threatened and endangered species and Species in Greatest Conservation Need. Most acquisition will be of fee title, but if more appropriate, acquisition could be a SNA-administered conservation easement with SNA designation. Included on the parcel list, are specific sites currently protected via permanent conservation easements that fall into SNA’s Strategic Plan. The rare features and unique plant communities on these sites would benefit from the protection and management provided by SNA and would add great value to SNA goals and mission. If acquired, an appraisal would be used to find the fair market value including current encumbrances such as conservation easements. New MBS/other scientific data will be incorporated into the SNA Strategic Plan to refine and increase strategic prioritization.

ENRTF BUDGET: \$3,382,587

Outcome	Completion Date
3a. acquisition as SNA of ~500 acres of high quality habitat	06/30/2022

III. PROJECT PARTNERS:

This proposal includes SNA work towards partnership project work on SNAs. Partners will NOT receive ENRTF Funding through this proposal. Partners include entities, such as The Nature Conservancy, Friends of the Mississippi River, Sugarloaf Northshore Stewardship Assn., local units of governments, and other non-profits.

IV. LONG-TERM- IMPLEMENTATION AND FUNDING:

Without SNA conservation, habitats for rare species and sites of high biodiversity significance are likely to be lost forever. The SNA Strategic Land Protection Plan targets acquisition (on existing public land/through acquisition) to insure the best ecological value for every dollar spent. Achieving SNA habitat management, public engagement and acquisition goals depends upon ongoing support from the ENRTF of \$5M-\$10M per biennium. Annual/biennial appropriations will also be sought from the Outdoor Heritage Fund and state bonding.

V. SEE ADDITIONAL PROPOSAL COMPONENTS:

A. Project Budget Spreadsheet, B. Map, C. Parcel List Spreadsheet, D. Acquisition, Easements, and Restoration Requirements, E. Project Manager Qualifications and Organization Description

Attachment A: Project Budget Spreadsheet
Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund
M.L. 2020 Budget Spreadsheet



Legal Citation:

Project Manager: Judy Schulte

Project Title: DNR Scientific and Natural Areas

Organization: DNR-Division of Ecological and Water Resources

Project Budget: \$5,875,000

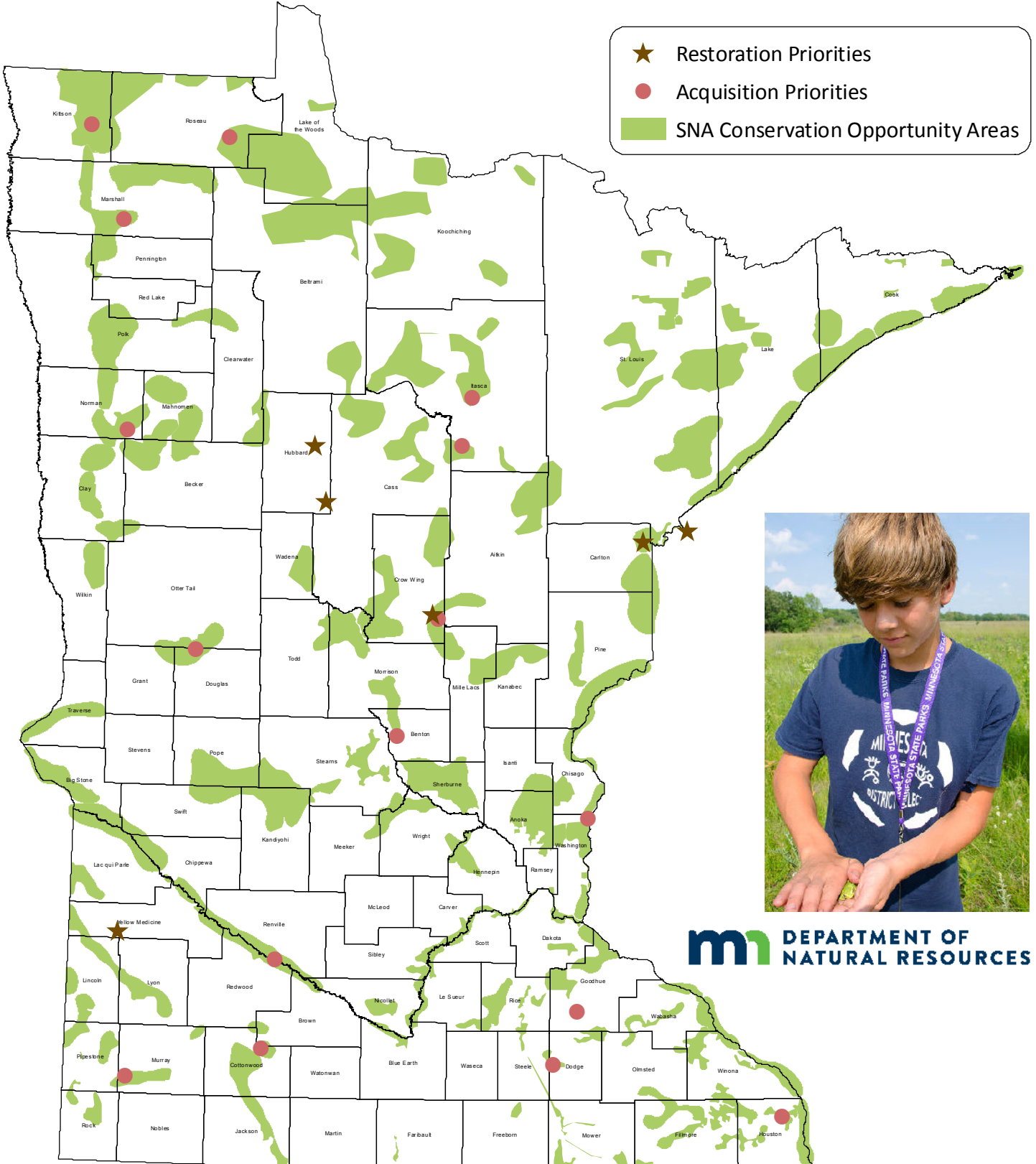
Project Length and Completion Date: 3 years, July 2020 – June 2023

Today's Date: April 15, 2019

ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES TRUST FUND BUDGET		Budget	Amount Spent	Balance
BUDGET ITEM				
Personnel (Wages and Benefits)		\$ 1,540,356	\$ -	\$ 1,540,356
~ 11.8 FTE (for 2 years each) for direct project activities spread across ~25 classified & unclassified staff paid primarily through grants (e.g. LCCMR, LSOHC, etc.) including ~15-25% fringe benefits as per state union contracts: 1.5 FTE (for 2 years) coordinators (acquisition, outreach, management, GIS) (~\$264,756) 8.7 FTE (for 2 years) specialists, naturalists, technicians, full time laborers (~\$1,157,600) 1.6 FTE (for 2 years) seasonal laborers & crews (~\$118,000)				
Professional/Technical/Service Contracts		\$ 569,000	\$ -	\$ 569,000
Professional/Technical Contracts: e.g. mgmt plan prep, monitoring, video/photo, etc. (~\$40,000) Conservation Corps MN: Act. 1 e.g. invasives, rxburn (\$128,000) & Act. 2 outreach (\$76,000) Service Contracts: e.g. invasives, woody removal, rxburn (~\$325,000) For all contracts, priority is given to CCM and contractors will be selected following state procurement & bidding processes				
Equipment/Tools/Supplies		\$ 83,400	\$ -	\$ 83,400
herbicide, posts, signs, safety supplies, equipment repair/parts, seed cleaning/testing, field tools, exclosure fence for monitoring, outreach materials, safety equipment for volunteers, etc.				
Fee Title Acquisition		\$ 3,000,000	\$ -	\$ 3,000,000
500 acres acquired by DNR & designated SNA				
Professional Services for Acquisition		\$ 220,000	\$ -	\$ 220,000
Includes real estate transaction costs, services for acquisition & LAM billings; appraisal & review; boundary survey; attorney general; closing costs; recording fees & taxes				
Printing		\$ 6,900	\$ -	\$ 6,900
designation orders, interpretive kiosk graphics, & info. materials				
Travel expenses in Minnesota		\$ 271,500	\$ -	\$ 271,500
DNR fleet charges (for operation of trucks, cars, & special fieldwork equipment) & instate travel costs (as per state contracts)				
Other		\$ 16,000	\$ -	\$ 16,000
MNIT Adaptive Management database upgrades and improvements				
DNR's direct and necessary costs (~\$167,844 total) pay for activities that are directly related to and necessary for accomplishing appropriated programs/projects. Direct and necessary costs cover HR Support (~\$35,985), Safety Support (~\$6,513), Financial Support (~\$27,122), Communication Support (~\$6,939), IT Support (~\$85,594), and Planning Support (~\$5,691) that are necessary to accomplishing funded programs/projects.		\$ 167,844	\$ -	\$ 167,844
COLUMN TOTAL		\$ 5,875,000	\$ -	\$ 5,875,000
SOURCE AND USE OF OTHER FUNDS CONTRIBUTED TO THE PROJECT				
	Status (secured or pending)	Budget	Spent	Balance
Non-State: Potential: partial landowner & partner donations; any actual \$s would be reported & accomplishments pro-rated.		\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
State: Some SNA acquisitions are funded with a combination of state appropriations		\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
In kind: DNR office facilities, copiers, computer, communications; supervisor & manager time (but contributions not tracked).		\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Other ENRTF APPROPRIATIONS AWARDED IN THE LAST SIX YEARS				
	Amount legally obligated but not yet spent	Budget	Spent	Balance
ML14, Ch226, Subd 7a SNA Acquisition, Restoration, Improvements & Citizen Engagement (Completed)		\$ -	\$ 2,540,000	\$ 2,540,000
ML15, Ch76, Sec 2, Subd 9c SNA Acquisition, Restoration, Enhancement & Public Engagement (Will be completed June 30, 2019)		\$ 259,362	\$ 4,000,000	\$ 3,669,266
ML16, Ch186, Sec 2, Subd 9a SNA Restoration (Will be completed June 30, 2019)		\$ 137,284	\$ 1,386,000	\$ 657,157
ML16, Ch186, Sec 2, Subd 9b SNA Mn Point Pine Forest SNA Acquisition		\$ 8,338	\$ 500,000	\$ 24,699
ML17, Ch 96, Sec 2, Subd 9b SNA Acquisition, Restoration, Citizen Science & Engagement		\$ 137,539	\$ 2,500,000	\$ 263,168
ML18, Ch 214, Art 4, Sec 2, Subd 9I SNA Habitat Restoration, Public Engagement, and Strategic Acquisition		\$ 41,855	\$ 3,250,000	\$ 10,787
ML19 DNR Scientific and Natural Areas (Pending)		\$ -	\$ 3,500,000	\$ -

ML20 Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund Proposal

SNA Habitat Restoration, Public Engagement, and Acquisition



mn DEPARTMENT OF
NATURAL RESOURCES

Attachment C: Template

Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund

M.L. 2020 Acquisition/Restoration Parcel List Spreadsheet

Project Title: DNR Scientific and Natural Areas

Legal Citation:

Project Manager: Judy Schulte

Organization: MN DNR Scientific and Natural Areas Program

College/Department/Division: Division of Ecological & Water Resources

M.L. 2020 ENRTF Appropriation: \$5,875,000

Project Length and Completion Date: 3 years, June 30, 2023

Today's Date: April 15, 2019



Instructions: Please include on the following list all targeted parcels that you are currently considering for acquisition (fee title or easement) or restoration (all phases) using the appropriation. The list may include more parcels than you will ultimately acquire or conduct restoration work on with the funds. To be eligible as part of your project, however, a parcel must be included on the list. Changes may be requested through the amendment process. Please update the status column and submit with your periodic workplan updates. Include any significant issues related to any particular parcel in your activity and project status sections of your Main Workplan Document.

#	Acquisition or Restoration Parcel Name	Geographic Coordinates (preferably from the center of the parcel) Format: [Deg.]° [Min.]' [Sec.]" [Hemis.]		Estimated Cost	Estimated Annual PILT Liabilities	County	Site Significance (please include what ecosystem (e.g., prairie, forest, wetland, savanna) is represented as well as the ecological significance, site importance, conservation value, and public benefits)	Activity Description (e.g. fee title acquisition, conservation easement acquisition, site preparation, restoration)	# of Acres	# of Shoreline Miles	Type of Landowner (private individual or trust, non-profit organization, for-profit entity)	Proposed Fee Title or Easement Holder (if applicable)	Status of work (e.g. engaged in landowner negotiations, no longer in consideration, restoration activities underway)
		Latitude	Longitude										
1	Bemis SNA (new)	48° 42' 22.3"	95° 29' 13.7"	\$ 297,500	\$ 2,975	Rosseau	15 species of rare orchids are found in the Bemis Swamp. Forested wetland.	Fee Title Acquisition (Concon)	595		Con-con land, remittances go to county	DNR-SNA	Proposed
2	Boltuck-Rice Forever Wild SNA addition	47° 9' 51.8"	93° 41' 26.2"	\$ 150,000	\$ 1,125	Itasca	Provides better public access to the site and protects old growth forest.	Fee Title Acquisition	25	0.025	Private	DNR-SNA	Proposed
3	Englund Ecotone SNA addition	45° 41' 18.1"	94° 8' 56.6"	#####	\$ 13,500	Benton	Provides the only public access to the site and protects additional oak forest, oak savanna, and sedge meadow.	Fee Title Acquisition	300		Private	DNR-SNA	Proposed
4	Falls Creek SNA addition	45° 16' 34.8"	92° 45' 56.1"	#####	\$ 18,000	Washington	One of the most diverse forested natural areas remaining in Washington County. Acquisition would expand the Falls Creek SNA by nearly 60%, protect 1200 linear feet of St. Croix river frontage, fill in a protection gap within the St. Croix National Scenic Riverway and provide greater/safer public access.	Fee Title Acquisition	120	0.5	Private	DNR-SNA	In communication with landowners
5	Frenchmans Bluff SNA addition	47° 11' 59.4"	96° 10' 46.5"	\$ 511,000	\$ 3,833	Norman	Dry Sand-gravel prairie in good condition.	Fee Title Acquisition	73		Private	DNR-SNA	In communication with landowners

6	Hythecker Prairie SNA addition	44° 1' 36.4"	93° 1' 56.4"	\$ 320,000	\$ 2,400	Dodge	200 foot grassland buffer on the east and north sides of the SNA to protect prairie from overspray from agricultural fields.	Fee Title Acquisition	40		Private	DNR-SNA	In communication with landowners
7	Lake Bronson Parkland SNA addition	48° 44' 5.7"	96° 32' 12.2"	\$ 150,000	\$ 1,125	Kittson	Borders the Two Rivers river and harbors rare orchids on wet prairie of outstanding biodiversity significance.	Fee Title Acquisition	180	0.25	Private	DNR-SNA	In communication with landowners
8	Lund Prairie (new) SNA	46° 5' 45.7"	95° 38' 21.3"	#####	\$ 37,500	Douglas	Large high quality sand/gravel prairie with 5 small lakes. Currently protected by NPB easement.	Fee Title Acquisition	775	3	Private (with NPB easement)	DNR-SNA	Proposed
9	Marsh Grove 36	48° 17' 18.8"	96° 22' 50.2"	#####	\$ 37,500	Marshall	Large high quality mesic to wet prairie	Fee Title Acquisition	480		Private (with NPB easement)	DNR-SNA	Proposed
10	Mille Lacs Moraine Addition	46° 16' 58.3"	93° 51' 10.9"	\$ 800,000	\$ 6,000	Crow Wing	MBS-mapped forest communities, Red-shouldered hawk, Cerulean Warbler	Fee Title Acquisition	265	0.5	Private	DNR-SNA	In communication with landowners
11	Moulton Prairie (NEW) SNA	43° 54' 57.2"	95° 59' 28.1"	\$ 560,000	\$ 4,200	Murray	Very rare A-quality prairie, currently protected by a NPB easement but has no public access.	Fee Title Acquisition	80	0.46	Private (with NPB easement)	DNR-SNA	Proposed
12	Mound Prairie SNA addition	43° 46' 12.9"	91° 26' 2.7"	\$ 200,000	\$ 1,500	Houston	Protect additional mesic and dry bluff prairie, and provide better management access to the SNA.	Fee Title Acquisition	40		Private	DNR-SNA	In communication with landowners
13	Morton Outcrop SNA addition	44° 33' 3.3"	94° 59' 36.6"	\$ 24,000	\$ 180	Renville	Protect additional rock outcrop and mesic prairie along with additional access to site.	Fee Title Acquisition	3		Private	DNR-SNA	In communication with landowners
14	North Fork Zumbro SNA addition	44° 18' 9.7"	92° 51' 20.6"	\$ 476,000	\$ 3,570	Goodhue	Protect additional floodplain forest and improve public access.	Fee Title Acquisition	68	0.5	Private	DNR-SNA	Proposed
15	Rock Ridge SNA addition	44° 4' 60.0"	95° 6' 4.0"	\$ 640,000	\$ 4,800	Cottonwood	Protect additional rock outcrop prairie.	Fee Title Acquisition	80		Private	DNR-SNA	In communication with landowners
16	Wabu Woods SNA addition	47° 23' 41.7"	93° 37' 0.1"	\$ 350,000	\$ 2,625	Itasca	Shoreline on Deer Lake (lake of outstanding biodiversity significance), Lowland white cedar forest, Red oak-sugar maple-basswood forest, low shrub poor fen.	Fee Title Acquisition	40	0.1	Private	DNR-SNA	In communication with Deer Lake Association
17	Lester Lake SNA	47° 8' 47.2"	94° 45' 53.7"	\$ 15,000	NA	Hubbard	Red Pine-White Pine Forest.	Rehabilitation	10	NA	Public	DNR-SNA	Proposed
18	Badoura JP Woodland SNA	46° 52' 34.1"	94° 40' 37.9"	\$ 30,000	NA	Hubbard	Jack Pine (yarrow) woodland.	Rehabilitation	23	NA	Public	DNR-SNA	Proposed
19	Antelope Valley SNA	44° 40' 31"	96° 07' 17"	\$ 10,000	NA	Yellow Medicine	Wet Saline Prairie, Upland Sandpiper noted onsite	Restoration	16.5	NA	Public	DNR-SNA	Proposed
20	Hemlock Ravine SNA	46° 40' 3.5"	92° 21' 6.0"	\$ 10,000	NA	Carlton	Rehabilitate slide areas/prevent erosion in an imperiled (S2) boreal hardwood forest with eastern hemlock (END).	Rehabilitation	2		public	DNR-SNA	Proposed

21	Mille Lacs Moraine SNA	46° 16' 54.9"	93° 51' 12.4"	\$ 7,000	NA	Crow Wing	Restore former building area within an high-quality oak forest with several special concern bird species and SGCN.	Restoration	1		public	DNR-SNA	Proposed
22	Minnesota Point Pine Forest SNA	46° 43' 4.2"	92° 2' 4.3"	\$ 7,000	NA	St. Louis	Restoration/erosion control in critically imperiled (S1) dune and beach systems with numerous listed species unique to the area.	Restoration	2	0.25	public	DNR-SNA	Proposed

NOTES:The above acquisition list and attached map identifies priority projects for this appropriation. The DNR may request to add other qualifying sites to the list.

Attachment D. Additional Work Plan Information for Acquisition, Easements, and Restoration

Acquisition/Restoration Information:

Fee Title Acquisition

1. Describe the selection process for identifying and including proposed parcels on the parcel list, including explanation of the criteria and decision-making process used to rank and prioritize parcels.

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. 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 staff use the "SNA Candidate Site Evaluation Guide" (initially developed through the ENRTF-funded SNA strategic planning process) which incorporates criteria to rate which sites are currently pursued. Criteria include diversity and quality of the native habitat, occurrence of rare species, occurrence of native plant communities under-represented in SNA system, parcel size, location of parcel in relation to biodiversity hotspots (particularly MBS-mapped areas of outstanding and high biodiversity significance) and other conservation lands (including SNA Strategic Land Protection Plan's Conservation Opportunity Areas and Minnesota Prairie Conservation Plan's Core Areas), potential for long-term management, and additional factors (e.g. landowner readiness, urgency, and willingness to donate; degree of threat, and partnership opportunities).

2. List all adopted state, regional, or local natural resource plans in which the lands included in the parcel list are identified. Include a link to the plan if one is available.

- *SNA Strategic Land Protection Plan* – <http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/snap/plan.html>
- *Minnesota's State Wildlife Action Plan* – <http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/mnwap/index.html>
- *Minnesota Prairie Conservation Plan* – www.dnr.state.mn.us/prairieplan

3. For any parcels acquired in fee title, a restoration and management must be prepared. Summarize the components and expected outcomes of restoration and management plans for parcels acquired by your organization, how these plans are kept on file by your organization, and overall strategies for long-term plan implementation, including how long-term maintenance and management needs of the parcel will be financed into the future.

Each parcel acquired as a new SNA in fee will have an Adaptive Management Plan (AMP) or if as an addition to an existing SNA, that SNAs Management Plan may be amended to add the new parcel. The AMPs include goals, ecological description, priority features with indicators, and management recommendations. The intended outcome of management of SNAs is that 1) all the lands be native plant communities or restored to plant communities that would have been native to the site, 2) these plant communities are sustained over time, and 3) that visitors are accommodated safely (unless visitor access is restricted by designation order). The goals for the SNA's management are based upon soils, topography, geology, and other factors necessary to sustain the plant community. Each plan includes an implementation timetable which summarizes ongoing management needs and a statement on funding. Long-term management costs (e.g. invasive species treatments, prescribed fire, and monitoring/evaluation) will be covered by a combination funding sources, including, but not limited to, ENRTF, Outdoor Heritage Fund (OHF), federal grants, and other funds as appropriated. Each AMP is kept in a DNR internal shared electronic filing system accessible to all SNA staff.

4. For each parcel to be conveyed to a State of Minnesota entity (e.g., DNR) after purchase, provide a statement confirming that county board approval will be obtained.

The DNR follows Minnesota Statutes 84.033 which require that any land acquired for designation as a SNA must have county board approval as prescribed under MS 97A.145.

5. If applicable (see M.S. 116P.17), provide a statement confirming that written approval from the DNR Commissioner will be obtained 10 business days prior to any final acquisition transaction.

As part of the DNR acquisition process, all SNA acquisitions are required to have approval of the Ecological and Water Resources Division Director and land conveyances are accepted by the Director or Deputy Director of Division of Lands and Minerals who have delegated authority to approve this for the Commissioner.

Restoration

1. Provide a statement confirming that all restoration activities completed with these funds will occur on land permanently protected by a conservation easement or public ownership.

All restoration/enhancement-related activities done with this appropriation are on lands designated as SNA which the state owns in fee or easement.

2. Summarize the components and expected outcomes of restoration and management plans for the parcels to be restored by your organization, how these plans are kept on file by your organization, and overall strategies for long-term plan implementation.

Each restoration/enhancement project will be based upon an ecological restoration and management plan and/or project plan with goals for reconstructing plant communities that are native to the site that are based upon soils, topography, geology, and other factors necessary to sustain the plant community. Each plan includes an implementation timetable which summarizes ongoing management needs. Each restoration and management plan and project plan is kept in a DNR internal shared electronic filing system accessible to all SNA staff.

3. Describe how restoration efforts will utilize and follow the Board of Soil and Water Resources "Native Vegetation Establishment and Enhancement Guidelines" in order to ensure ecological integrity and pollinator enhancement.

The SNA Program follows or exceeds the recommendations found in the BWSR "Native Vegetation Establishment and Enhancement Guidelines". SNA restorations typically follow the current BOWSR Guidelines, including Project Guidance, Plant Community Restoration, Temporary Cover and Forest/Woodlands. The SNA Program follows the general direction of the BWSR Guidelines for "Recommended Steps for Obtaining Plant Materials", and has additional and more restrictive requirements for restoration material sources. Specifically, SNA restorations use seeds of a local ecotype, collected from onsite or within 25 miles. Restoration and management of DNR lands are governed by DNR Operational Order #124 on "Plant Material Standards for Native Plant Community Restoration" and #130 on "Pollinator Habitat" (which include BMPs).

4. Describe how the long-term maintenance and management needs of the parcel being restored with these funds will be met and financed into the future.

Long-term management costs (e.g. invasive species treatments, prescribed fire/disturbance, and monitoring/evaluation) will be covered by a combination of funding sources, including, but not limited to, ENRTF, Outdoor Heritage Fund (OHF), federal grants, and other funds as appropriated.

5. Describe how consideration will be given to contracting with Conservation Corps of Minnesota for any restoration activities.

DNR has a standing general contract with CCM under which the SNA Program often does project or activity specific agreements. For restoration and site improvement projects, CCM has been and will continue to be used when appropriate for hand seed harvest, invasive species treatment, prescribed burning, and will be considered on restoration projects for post-planting weed control.

6. Provide a statement indicating that evaluations will be completed on parcels where activities were implemented both 1) initially after activity completion and 2) three years later as a follow-up. Evaluations should analyze

improvements to the parcel and whether goals have been met, identify any problems with the implementation, and identify any findings that can be used to improve implementation of future restoration efforts at the site or elsewhere.

Plant community reconstruction and rehabilitation projects will be evaluated and a report submitted to the LCCMR to ascertain how well the native plants have been established and non-natives controlled. Each evaluation report will include a summary of management plan outcomes, activities completed through the project, map of the project area, statement of ongoing management needs and funding, and summary of the evaluation.

PROGRAM MANAGER QUALIFICATIONS

Project Manager: Judy Schulte, Prairie Biologist (Interim until SNA Unit Supervisor position is filled)
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, 2017-2018 ENRTF Native Prairie Stewardship & Native Prairie Bank Acquisition
- ML 2011, 2013-2019 ENRTF Scientific and Natural Areas Acquisition and Restoration
- ML2010-2019 OHF Accelerated Prairie Restoration & Enhancement of DNR Lands
- ML2011-2019 OHF WMA, SNA & NPB Easement Acquisition
- ML2014-2018 OHF Accelerated Native Prairie Bank Protection

Judy has served as the Prairie Biologist with the SNA program since March of 2015. She has been officially acting as the interim SNA Unit Supervisor since May 2018. 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.