



Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund (ENRTF) M.L. 2011 Work Plan

Date of Status Update:

Date of Next Status Update: 12/1/2011

Date of Work Plan Approval: 6/23/2011

Project Completion Date: 6/30/2014

Is this an amendment request? _____

Project Title: LaSalle Lake State Recreation Area Acquisition

Project Manager: Susan Schmidt

Affiliation: The Trust for Public Land

Address: 2610 University Ave W, Ste 300

City: St Paul **State:** MN **Zipcode:** 55114

Telephone Number: (651) 999-5317

Email Address: susan.schmidt@tpl.org

Web Address: <http://www.tpl.org/minnesota>

Location:

Counties Impacted: Hubbard

Ecological Section Impacted: Northern Minnesota Drift and lake Plains (212N)

Total ENRTF Project Budget:	ENRTF Appropriation \$:	2,000,000
	Amount Spent \$:	<u>0</u>
	Balance \$:	2,000,000

Legal Citation: M.L. 2011, First Special Session, Chp. 2, Art.3, Sec. 2, Subd. 04f

Appropriation Language:

\$1,000,000 the first year and \$1,000,000 the second year are from the trust fund to the commissioner of natural resources for an agreement with The Trust for Public Land to acquire approximately 190 acres to be designated as a state recreation area as provided in Minnesota Statutes, section 86A.05, subdivision 3, on LaSalle Lake adjacent to the upper Mississippi River. If this acquisition is not completed by July 15, 2012, then the appropriation is available to the Department of Natural Resources for other state park and recreation area acquisitions on the priority list. Up to \$10,000 may be retained by the Department of Natural Resources at the request of The Trust for Public Land for transaction costs, associated professional services, and restoration needs.

I. PROJECT TITLE: La Salle Lake State Recreation Area Acquisition

II. PROJECT SUMMARY:

La Salle Lake is a rare opportunity to protect a large natural area of regional and statewide significance with steeply-sloping tunnel valley terrain that includes the entirety of Minnesota's second deepest lake, a cold-water stream, high-quality forest and wetlands, and a half mile of the Mississippi River. The Statewide Conservation and Preservation Plan (SCPP) states, "habitat issues are arguably the most important issues facing the conservation and preservation of natural resources throughout Minnesota". La Salle Lake meets habitat recommendations from the SCPP, including protection of priority land habitats, protection of critical shorelands of streams and lakes – particularly 'protection of aquatic habitats at a large scale' and 'providing shoreline buffers', improving connectivity and access to outdoor recreation and protection of in-water habitats – particularly 'in-stream habitat' and 'deep water lakes with exceptional water quality'. This unique natural area is surrounded by a landscape of thousands of acres of publicly owned land, including the Mississippi Headwaters State Forest, and Itasca State Park. The La Salle Lake acquisition consists of two phases. The Trust for Public Land (TPL) and the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) completed the acquisition of Phase I (257 acres of the property north of Scenic Byway Highway #9) in December 2010. This proposal addresses Phase II, which is the acquisition of the remaining 723 acres of the property that includes the entire pristine La Salle Lake. The funding sought in this request would fund approximately 190 of those 723 acres and would be managed as a State Recreation Area. Funding is being sought from other sources for the balance of the Phase II property.

An innovative management plan that will be coordinated across multiple divisions of the Minnesota DNR is currently being developed and will be implemented once the property is acquired. La Salle Lake State Recreation Area will be the first project ever to implement this type of cross-division plan in the DNR Northwest Region and will serve as a model for future state land management plans. Management divisions include: Parks and Recreation Division (State Park/ Recreation Area), Division of Ecological Resources (Scientific and Natural Area-SNA), and Division of Wildlife and Fisheries (Wildlife Management Area-WMA & Aquatic Management Area-AMA). A restoration and management plan that includes likely sources of future funding will also be developed and implemented to ensure La Salle Lake is a well-maintained resource for Minnesotans and other visitors. Funding for development and restoration is contained in M.L. 2011 funding recommendations for the Outdoor Heritage Fund and the Parks and Trails Fund.

This project will increase and improve access to a prime outdoor recreation area for future generations. Surrounded by thousands of acres of publicly owned land, protection of the La Salle Lake natural area will ensure connection to the nearby Itasca State Park and access to the Mississippi Headwaters State Forest. This goal is consistent with habitat recommendation #3 in the SCPP, to "improve connectivity and access to outdoor recreation", as well as helps to achieve the primary goal in the State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan 2008-2012 of "increasing participation in outdoor recreation by all Minnesotans and visitors". The La Salle Lake property has an existing campground area that can serve as a future visitor center and campground for the State Recreation Area and will provide many opportunities for recreation such as hiking, birdwatching, canoeing, fishing and hunting.

Goal: Completion of Phase II: Acquisition of 190 acres of steep-sloping forestland, deep-lake shoreline and cold-water stream habitat in Hubbard County near the Mississippi River Headwaters to be managed as an State Recreation Area. The property has been ranked as having 'Outstanding and High Biodiversity Significance' by the Minnesota County Biological Survey (MCBS). Conservation of this property ensures the protection of extremely important natural resources including:

- The entire pristine La Salle Lake. At ~213 feet deep, it is considered the second deepest lake in Minnesota, with MCBS ranked 'Outstanding Quality' aquatic plant habitat.
- La Salle Creek, a cold-water trout stream that furthers the goal of Minnesota's Aquatic Management Area Acquisition Plan 2008-2033 to "acquire... cold water stream habitat in the next 25 years to provide sustainable populations of trout and greater opportunities for angling recreation for future generations".
- Native, rare and threatened species identified by MCBS. The property contains 17 different

native plant communities including over 90 species of trees and shrubs and more than 140 species of herbaceous plants, including 12 species of orchids. Other rare plants (northern oak fern, hair-like sedge, ram's head lady slipper) and important wildlife habitat including trumpeter swans (state threatened species), two state special concern caddisfly species and gray wolves (one of DNR's 'species in greatest conservation need') are found throughout the area.

The Trust for Public Land, the Minnesota DNR and the landowner, in partnership with local governments, educational institutions, environmental non-profits, local businesses and local sportsman groups are working together to ensure the protection and management of the La Salle Lake property so it can be enjoyed by future generations. Once acquired, the property will be in state-ownership and managed by multiple divisions of the DNR. Unanimous approval has already been obtained from the Hubbard County Board for this acquisition. Written approval from the DNR commissioner will be obtained prior to the acquisition. An analysis will be provided to LCCMR and the Office of Management and Budget of increased operations and maintenance costs likely to be incurred by public entities as a result of this acquisition and how these costs are to be paid.

III. PROJECT STATUS UPDATES:

Project Status as of December 2011:

Project Status as of July 2012:

Project Status as of December 2012:

Project Status as of July 2013:

IV. PROJECT ACTIVITIES AND OUTCOMES:

ACTIVITY 1: Acquisition

Description: Acquire fee-title to permanently protect 190 acres of SNA quality habitat that provides multiple benefits for conservation. ENRTF will provide funding for 190 acres of the 723 acres Phase II property. The DNR has a copy of the appraisal that valued this highly developable lakeshore property at \$10,500 per acre.

Summary Budget Information for Activity 1:

ENRTF Budget: \$ 2,000,000
Amount Spent: \$ 0
Balance: \$ 2,000,000

Activity Completion Date:

Outcome	Completion Date	Budget
1. Acquire 190 acres in fee-title and transfer to the MN DNR	July 15, 2012	\$ 2,000,000

Activity Status as of December 2011:

Activity Status as of July 2012:

Activity Status as of December 2012:

Activity Status as of July 2013:

Final Report Summary:

V. DISSEMINATION:

Description: Once this transaction is completed, The Trust for Public Land will disseminate information on the TPL website, www.tpl.org, broadcast emails to TPL list serve members, distribute press releases, and include information in TPL's newsletters and publications as appropriate. TPL will also work with the DNR to ensure information is distributed to its listserves and on its website as well.

Status as of December 2011:

Status as of July 2012:

Status as of July 2012:

Status as of July 2013:

Final Report Summary:

VI. PROJECT BUDGET SUMMARY:

A. ENRTF Budget:

Budget Category	\$ Amount	Explanation
Fee Title Acquisition:	\$ 1,990,000	Acquisition capital
Professional Services for Acq:	\$ 10,000	DNR land acquisition costs and initial site development
TOTAL ENRTF BUDGET:	\$ 2,000,000	

Explanation of Use of Classified Staff: N/A.

Explanation of Capital Expenditures Greater Than \$3,500: N/A.

Number of Full-time Equivalent (FTE) funded with this ENRTF appropriation: N/A.

Number of Full-time Equivalent (FTE) estimated to be funded through contracts with this ENRTF appropriation: N/A.

B. Other Funds:

Source of Funds	\$ Amount Proposed	\$ Amount Spent	Use of Other Funds
State			
Outdoor Heritage Fund	\$ 4,632,000	\$	Acquisition capital, acquisition costs, initial site development and restoration.
Parks and Trails Fund	\$ 2,100,000		Acquisition capital, acquisition costs, initial site development and restoration.
TOTAL OTHER FUNDS:	\$ 6,732,000	\$	

VII. PROJECT STRATEGY:

A. Project Partners:

The Trust for Public Land (TPL) will be facilitating the fee-title acquisition and assisting the Minnesota DNR in development of management plans. TPL has a proven track record of successful management of complex and time-sensitive real estate projects. Because of the immediacy of this rare real estate opportunity, TPL has offered to help and the Minnesota DNR has encouraged the partnership. The Minnesota DNR will be the final fee-title holder and will be developing and implementing the management plans for the site. This project will have many other partners throughout the process including the landowner, local governments, educational institutions, environmental non-profits, local businesses and local sportsman groups.

B. Project Impact and Long-term Strategy:

La Salle Lake State Recreational Area will provide nearly one thousand acres of rare habitat and unique terrain for Minnesotans and other visitors to enjoy for generations to come. The La Salle Lake property will provide a connection to the Itasca State Forest, the Mississippi Headwaters State Forest as well as other publicly owned lands surrounding the property. An innovative DNR multiple-division Management and Recreational Use Plan is being developed and will be implemented once the property is acquired. An Operations and Maintenance Plan that identifies potential future sources of funding will also be developed to ensure La Salle Lake will be a well-managed, viable resource for Minnesota.

C. Spending History: Funding for the Phase I La Salle Lake acquisition, which closed in December 2010, consisted of \$585,000 of 2010 Outdoor Heritage Fund, \$337,299.80 RIM, and \$17,700.20 Lakeshore Lease (SNA).

VIII. ACQUISITION/RESTORATION LIST: See attached list.

IX. MAP(S): See attached maps.

X. RESEARCH ADDENDUM: N/A.

XI. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS:

Periodic work plan status update reports will be submitted not later than December 2011, July 2012, and December 2012. A final report and associated products will be submitted between June 30 and August 1, 2013 as requested by the LCCMR.

**Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund
M.L. 2011 Acquisition/Restoration List**

Project Title: La Salle Lake State Recreation Area Acquisition

Project Manager Name: Susan Schmidt

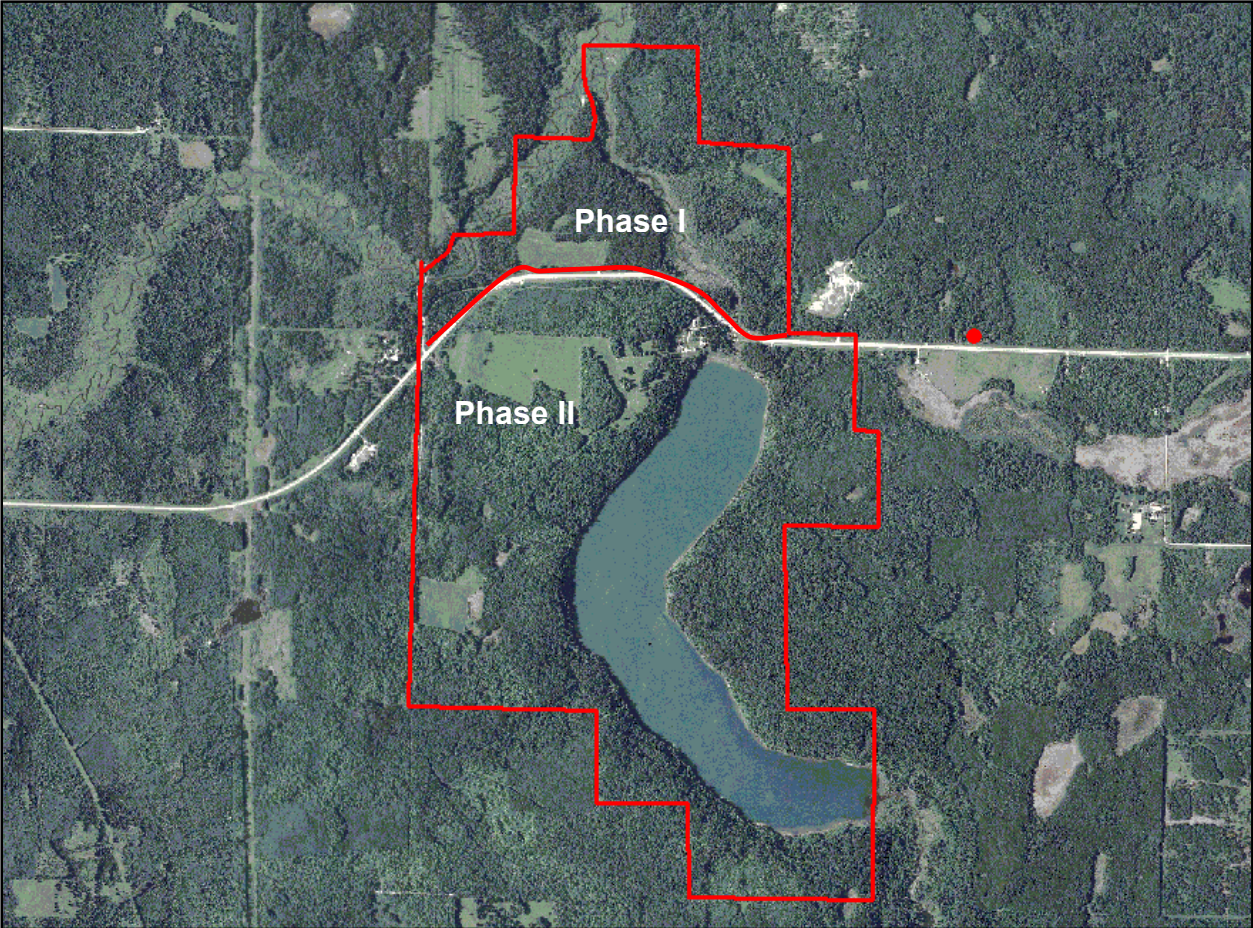
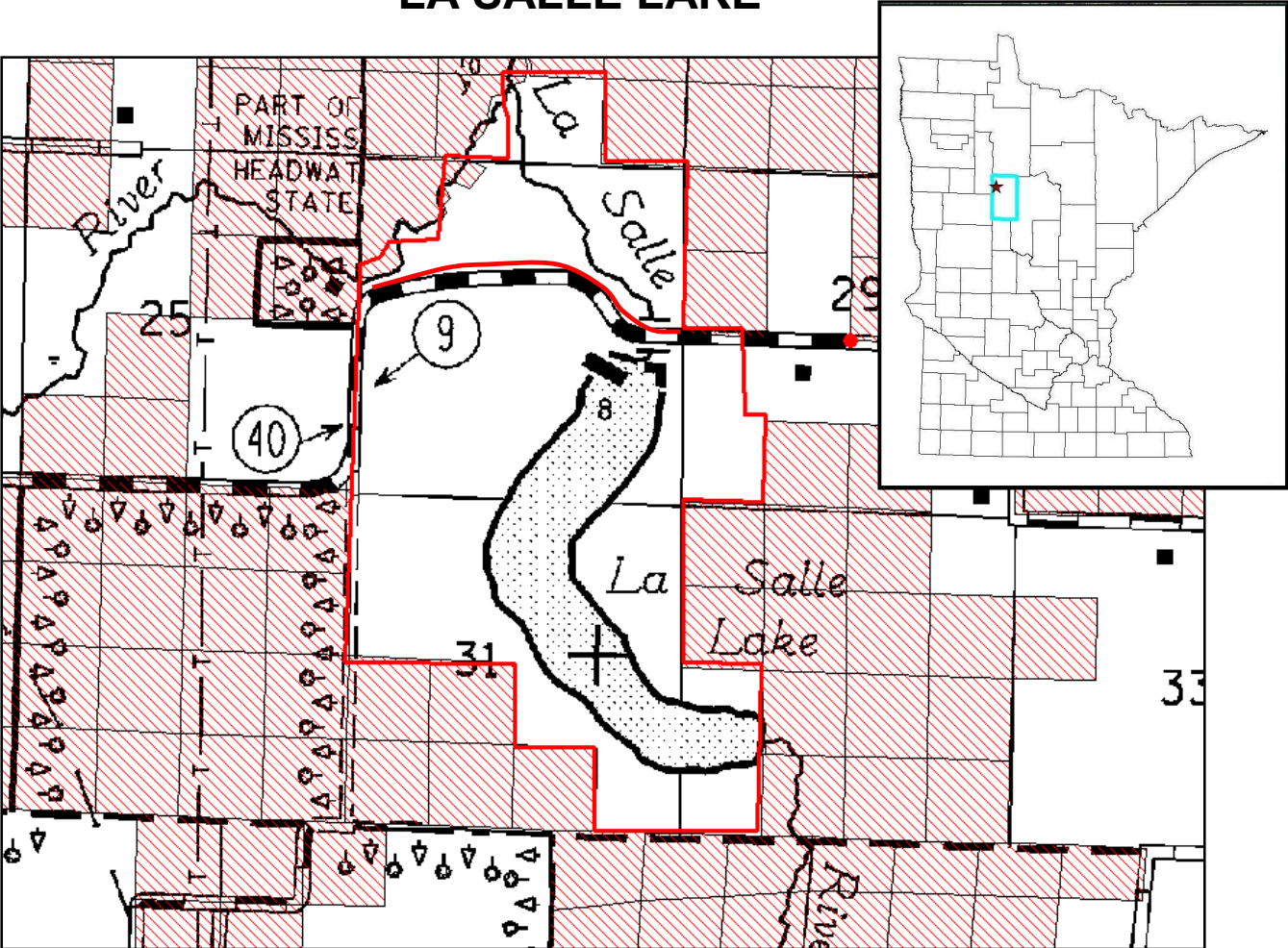
M.L. 2011 ENRTF Appropriation: \$ 2,000,000

#	Acquisition or Restoration Parcel Name	Geographical Coordinates (Provide Latitude/Longitude OR UTM-X/UTM-Y)		Ecosystem Description	Ecological Significance	Activity Description	# of Acres	# of Shoreline Miles (if applicable)	Proposed Fee Title or Easement Holder (if applicable)	Status
		Latitude or UTM-X	Longitude or UTM-Y							
1	La Salle Lake	438532.9087	294078.5766	Forest, wetland, lake, stream	MCBS: Outstanding Biodiversity Significance	Acquisition	190	over 3.5 mi.	DNR	Under option.
NOTES:										

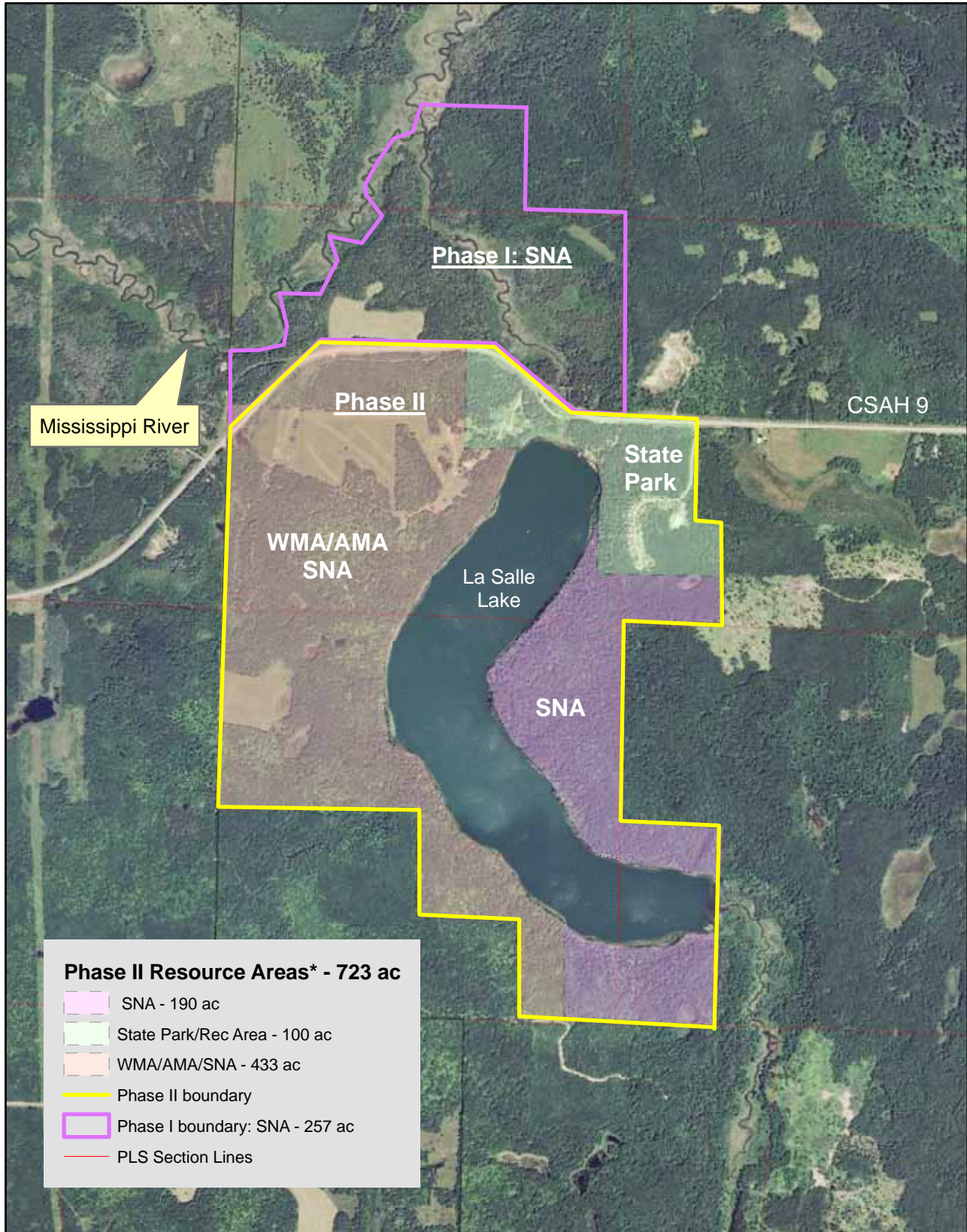
Attachment A: Budget Detail for M.L. 2011 (FY 2012-13) Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund Projects

Project Title: La Salle Lake State Recreation Area Acquisition					
Legal Citation: <i>Fill in your project's legal citation from the appropriation language</i>					
Project Manager: Susan Schmidt					
M.L. 2011 (FY 2012-13) ENRTF Appropriation: \$ 2,000,000					
Project Length and Completion Date: July 15, 2012					
Date of Update: June 3, 2011					
ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES TRUST FUND BUDGET	Activity 1 Budget	Amount Spent	Balance	TOTAL BUDGET	TOTAL BALANCE
BUDGET ITEM	Acquisition				
Fee Title Acquisition	1,990,000	0	1,990,000	1,990,000	1,990,000
Professional Services for Acquisition: DNR land acquisition costs and initial site development	10,000	0	10,000	10,000	10,000
COLUMN TOTAL	\$2,000,000	\$0	\$2,000,000	\$2,000,000	\$2,000,000

LA SALLE LAKE



Acquisition Phases and Potential Resource Management Areas* - July 14, 2010



* DNR's goal is to manage this property (identified as a Site of Outstanding Biodiversity Significance by the Minnesota County Biological Survey) as an integrated resource area and not as separate units.