

ML2019 Project Abstract

For the Period Ending June 30, 2024

PROJECT TITLE: DNR Scientific and Natural Areas

PROJECT MANAGER: Judy Elbert

AFFILIATION: MN DNR- Scientific and Natural Areas Program

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FUNDING SOURCE: Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund

LEGAL CITATION: M.L. 2019, First Special Session, Chp. 4, Art. 2, Sec. 2, Subd. 09a as extended by M.L. 2022, Chp. 94, Sec. 2, Subd. 19 (c.1) [to June 30, 2023]

APPROPRIATION AMOUNT: \$3,500,000

AMOUNT SPENT: \$3,479,892

AMOUNT REMAINING: \$20,108

Sound bite of Project Outcomes and Results

Protected a mix of native plant communities which house state endangered and special concerns species, Species in Greatest Conservation Need and a wide variety of other species through additions to Quarry Park SNA and Grey Cloud Dunes SNA. Over 1,980 acres across 62 SNAs had restoration and enhancement activities executed.

Overall Project Outcome and Results

Minnesota's Scientific and Natural Areas (SNAs) are public lands representing the state's best hope for protecting rare features and averting biodiversity loss. This appropriation strengthened the "science" in SNA through monitoring-based habitat enhancement, citizen-science action and outreach, and strategic acquisition to protect high-quality natural lands. Over 1,980 acres across 62 SNAs had restoration and enhancement activities take place, this includes prairie reconstruction, terrestrial and woody invasive species control, prescribed disturbance (e.g. prescribed fire, haying, grazing), and other site improvement work. Ecological, compliance, and adaptive management monitoring was completed on 57 SNAs. Knowledge gained through this monitoring will help managers and partners improve management of the native plant communities and rare species within SNAs.

From July 2021 to December 2022, 115 interpretive events were held on SNAs across the state, including 7 Self-Guided Bioblitzes which allowed participants to visit the host SNA to log observations at their convenience and in a COVID-safe manner. Many of the in-person on-site events were hosted by our volunteer site stewards, a community which grew to 169 individuals (at 133 SNAs) volunteering their time as the designated local liaison reporting observations and assisting with land-management activities.

Two additions to existing SNA's were acquired—a 47.2-acre addition to Grey Cloud Dunes SNA (40.1 acres through this appropriation) and a 79.9-acre addition to Quarry Park SNA (22.0 acres through this appropriation). The Grey Cloud Dunes addition is a mix of dry barrens prairie, wetland, and former golf course (to be restored to native species). The Quarry Park addition is a mature hardwood forest—Southern Dry Mesic Oak (Red Maple) Forest with exposed granite rock outcrops. Through this appropriation's support for programmatic acquisition work, around 3 other SNA acquisition projects were recruited and developed, these have now proceeded on alternative funding.

Project Results Use and Dissemination

The [SNA website](#) and [events calendar](#) were updated frequently. The [SNA Facebook channel](#) achieved 9,400 followers. The [SNA Flickr social media channel](#), used to encourage high quality photo sharing, had 115 members and over 1,562 photos. The SNA Program began contributing content to Instagram, with posts twice per month to [DNR's agency-wide Instagram channel](#). Through this appropriation, six issues ([Fall 2021](#), [Winter 2021](#), [Spring 2022](#), [Summer 2022](#), [Fall 2022](#), [Winter 2022](#)) of the Nature Notes e-newsletters were delivered to 12,200 subscribers. Acknowledgement of the ENRTF was included in all project communications per LCCMR's guidelines.



Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund (ENRTF)

M.L. 2019 ENRTF Work Plan Final Report

Today's Date: August 14, 2024

Final Report

Date of Work Plan Approval: June 5, 2019

Project Completion Date: June 30, 2024

PROJECT TITLE: DNR Scientific and Natural areas

Project Manager: Judy Elbert

Organization: MN DNR- Scientific and Natural Areas Program

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

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Web Address: mndnr.gov/snas

Location: Statewide

Total Project Budget: \$3,500,000

Amount Spent: \$3,479,892

Balance: \$20,108

Legal Citation: M.L. 2019, First Special Session, Chp. 4, Art. 2, Sec. 2, Subd. 09a as extended by M.L. 2022, Chp. 94, Sec. 2, Subd. 19 (c.1) [to June 30, 2023]

Appropriation Language: \$3,500,000 the first year is from the trust fund to the commissioner of natural resources for the scientific and natural areas (SNA) program to restore and enhance wildlife habitat on SNAs, increase public involvement and outreach, and strategically acquire high-quality lands that meet criteria for SNAs under Minnesota Statutes, section 86A.05, from willing sellers. A list of proposed acquisitions and restorations is required in the work plan.

M.L. 2022 - Sec. 2. ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES TRUST FUND; EXTENSIONS. [to June 30, 2023]

I. PROJECT STATEMENT:

The unique and vital role of state Scientific and Natural Areas (SNAs) will be increased through wildlife habitat restoration and enhancement (prescribed burn, invasive control, etc.), increased public involvement, and strategic acquisition. About 500 acres of native habitat restoration, enhancement, and site improvement activities will be targeted at SNAs threatened by human impacts, 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 70 SNA events and a

network of volunteer site stewards at 130 SNAs. About 300 acres will be acquired from willing sellers and designated as SNAs in order to strategically protect at risk native plant communities and wildlife habitat of state significance identified by the Minnesota Biological Survey (MBS) and the updated SNA Strategic Land Protection Plan.

II. OVERALL PROJECT STATUS UPDATES:

Amendment Request May 11, 2020: Request to change Project Manager from Judy Schulte to Molly Roske, SNA Program Supervisor (molly.roske@state.mn.us, 651-259-5094).

Request to change name of parcel currently listed as “Sioux Agency SNA” to “Rock Valley Prairie SNA” on parcel list. This is the same parcel, but a change has been made as to its future name once acquired and designated as an SNA. **Amendment Approved by LCCMR 6/2/2020**

First Update May 11, 2020: Restoration and prescribed burn planning are underway, with more work to begin in coming months. Firebreak installation has occurred at 2 SNAs to-date, installing 1.84 miles of firebreak in preparation of planned burns. Spending has not yet begun on the outcomes related to Activity 2 (Public engagement, outreach, & citizen science) or Activity 3 (Strategic Acquisition) on this appropriation, but rather is finishing up on prior appropriations. Planning for this work is underway, and spending on these activities will begin in the next few months.

Amendment Request November 8, 2020: Request to move \$38,000 from Personnel to Professional/Technical/Service Contracts. This shift represents work on this appropriation that will be performed by a Conservation Corps of Minnesota & Iowa (CCMI) Individual Placement supervised by the SNA Program out of Central Office, on Activity 2 (Public engagement, outreach & citizen science). The movement of these funds to contracts is necessary so as to enable SNA Program to set up the new calendar-year 2021 contract with CCMI to cover half of this position’s body of work for the coming calendar year. **Amendment Approved by LCCMR 11/20/2020.**

Second Update November 8, 2020: Restoration and prescribed burn planning are underway, with more work to begin in the upcoming field season. Firebreak have been put in place at 2 SNAs to date, at 1.84 miles in preparation of hopes of a 2021 prescribed burn season, as permitted within the additional health and safety measures in place. Spending has not yet begun on the outcomes related to Activity 2 (Public engagement, outreach, & citizen science) or Activity 3 (Strategic Acquisition) on this appropriation, but rather is finishing up on prior appropriations. Planning for this work is underway, and spending on these activities will begin in the next few months.

Amendment Request April 30, 2021: Request to move \$100,000 from Personnel to Professional/Technical/Service Contracts. With staffing capacity issues and some positions slated to be funded by this work remaining vacant, contractors are increasingly filling a need on restoration and enhancement work. Therefore a deficit in contracting dollars is projected, and this movement of funds is requested in anticipation of contracting needs. **Amendment approved by LCCMR 05/28/2021.**

Third Update April 30, 2021: Restoration planning is underway, with a total of about 26 acres of seed harvest for prairie restorations having begun on 2 SNAs. Prescribed burn planning is also underway for the present field season under new strict pandemic-specific safety guidelines and protocols as approved by the DNR, and fire-break installation has been completed at 2 SNAs in anticipation of the renewed possibility to conduct burns. Terrestrial invasive species control has also been carried out at 2 SNAs on 194 acres. Spending has not yet begun on the outcomes related to Activity 2 (Public engagement, outreach, & citizen science) or Activity 3 (Strategic Acquisition) on this appropriation, but rather is finishing up on prior appropriations. Planning for this work is underway, and spending on these activities will begin in the coming months.

Amendment Request November 5, 2021: Request to add “and/or other forms of prescribed disturbance” to the Outcome 1.3 language. Due to 2021’s historic drought, ongoing COVID protocols, and the hiring freeze that was only recently lifted, the SNA prescribed burning program continued to lag behind outcomes as originally proposed. However, alternative work-arounds have been studied and applied for prescribed haying, mowing, and grazing on sites and under conditions that are appropriate, and where the beneficial effects of such practices would approximate the effects of a prescribed burn on that site.

Amendment approved by LCCMR 11/24/21

Request to reduce the Activity 3 Outcome to acquisition of ~250 acres of high quality habitat. With this appropriation’s current budget for fee-title acquisition, average cost-per-acre across acquisition projects would have to be the lowest of any other contemporary SNA ENRTF appropriation. But by contrast, real estate market volatility and increasing prices may make it difficult to achieve the current outcome of 300 acres under binding agreement with the currently budgeted \$1,685,000 by the end of this Fiscal Year.

Amendment approved by LCCMR 11/24/21

Fourth Update November 5, 2021: Planning and prep for restoration and prescribed burn activities are underway, while other forms of prescribed disturbance – namely prescribed haying – have been completed on 175 acres at 5 prairie or outcrop SNAs. Invasive species treatment activities have advanced significantly since last reporting, with woody and/or herbaceous invasives removed from a total of over 350 acres at 14 SNAs, and more slated for treatment in the coming months. Site development projects have also been carried out at 4 SNAs, including 3 SNA sites where new interpretive kiosks have been installed. (1.6) Adaptive management plans are currently underway or planned for 7 SNA sites.

From July through October 2021, 39 stewardship and/or interpretive events were held on SNAs across the state, including several which were Self-Guided Bioblitzes allowing participants to visit the host SNA to log observations at their convenience and in a COVID-safe manner. Many of the in-person on-site events were hosted by our official volunteer Site Stewards, a community which is growing to 159 individuals volunteering their time as the designated local liaison reporting observation and assisting with land-management activities; 142 SNAs have at least one designated site steward at this time. In addition, this appropriation supported the creation and release of regular natural heritage content on the SNA Facebook page (several times per week), twice-monthly contributions of SNA content to the DNR Instagram channel, and quarterly publication of the SNA newsletter *Nature Notes* which surpassed the 10,000 recipients benchmark with the Fall 2021 edition! Acquisition and protection activities on this appropriation have seen increased delays and challenges in the past year, but progress is being made: after years of setbacks, a second parcel addition to Grey Cloud Dunes SNA is in negotiations with the current landowners, as a separate “phase 2” project of the Mississippi Dunes former golf course property. Other acquisition projects are under development and advancing through the process, but it is difficult to determine which of these projects will progress in a timely manner to utilize this ML19 appropriation. Once process steps are made clear via the passage of COVID-related extension legislation through the Minnesota Legislature, it is our intent to make use of this mechanism to request an extension of the present appropriation for one additional Fiscal Year, for all Activity areas and outcomes.

Amendment Request April 2, 2022: Request to make budgetary adjustments moving funds in the following amounts: \$43,000 from *Personnel* to *Contracts*, and \$2,000 from *CCMI (computer rental)* to *MNIT AMSD upgrades*. Rationale: Due to ongoing staff-shortages and slow recovery from the pandemic-induced statewide hiring freeze, contracted field work is becoming a larger component of the SNA Program’s implementation strategy on this appropriation, most notably for Activity 1 outcomes (restoration and enhancement). Also, additional AMSD upgrades by MNIT will better utilize the funds originally earmarked on this appropriation for agency support of the two CCMI individual placement positions, for which other funding has been identified.

Amendment Approved by LCCMR 4/13/2022.

Fifth Update April 2, 2022: Planning and prep for restoration and prescribed burn activities are underway, while other forms of prescribed disturbance – namely prescribed haying – have been completed on 175 acres at 5 prairie or outcrop SNAs. Invasive species treatment activities have advanced significantly since last reporting, with woody and/or herbaceous invasives removed from a total of about 565 acres at 20 SNAs, and more slated for treatment in the coming months. Site development projects have also been carried out at 7 SNAs, including 3 SNA sites where new interpretive kiosks have been installed. (1.6) Adaptive management plans are currently underway or planned for 7 SNA sites. From July 2021 to date, 49 interpretive events have been held on SNAs across the state, including several which were Self-Guided Bioblitzes allowing participants to visit the host SNA to log observations at their convenience and in a COVID-safe manner. Many of the in-person on-site events were hosted by our volunteer Site Stewards, a community which is growing to 171 individuals volunteering their time as the designated local liaison reporting observation and assisting with land-management activities; 139 SNAs have at least one designated site steward at this time.

In addition, this appropriation supported the creation and regular release of natural heritage content on the SNA Facebook page (several times per week), twice-monthly contributions of SNA content to the DNR Instagram channel, and quarterly publication of the SNA newsletter *Nature Notes* which surpassed the 10,000 recipients benchmark with the Fall 2021 edition! Acquisition and protection activities on this appropriation have seen increased delays and challenges in the past year, but progress is being made: after years of setbacks, a second parcel addition to Grey Cloud Dunes SNA is in negotiations with the current landowners, as a separate “phase 2” project of the Mississippi Dunes former golf course property. Other acquisition projects are under development and advancing through the process. An extension of an additional year to work through some of these acquisition challenges would greatly enhance the SNA Program’s acquisition staff’s ability to reach completion on acquisition targets. The Program’s staffing has also seen one significant boon in this area, having recently (March 30th, 2022) onboarded the new SNA Statewide Acquisition Coordinator, a position which hadn’t had a permanent incumbent since February 2020. The new Acquisition Coordinator comes with tremendous experience and skill to help move the SNA Program’s acquisition programming toward greater effectiveness and efficiency in coming months and years.

Update as of June 30, 2022:

Project extended to June 30, 2023 by LCCMR 6/30/22 as a result of M.L. 2022, Chp.94, Sec. 2, Subd. 19, legislative extension criteria being met.

Amendment Request September 1, 2022: Request to change project manager from Molly Roske to Jan Shaw Wolff. Molly has taken a different position and Jan will be acting as project manager in the interim until a new SNA Supervisor can be hired. Request to change status reporting due dates to align with past deadlines. Changing March 1, 2023 to April 1, 2023. Request to add an 80-acre parcel of mature Southern Dry Mesic Oak (Red Maple) Forest with numerous exposed granite bedrock rock outcrops to the parcel list. This acquisition is adjacent to the existing Quarry Park SNA and is within a greenbelt that also includes the City-owned Quarry Park and Nature Preserve.

Additionally request to make the following budget shifts. Travel costs are less than originally projected therefore this amendment allows for the shift of these dollars to contracts and personnel which will be used to exceed outcomes associated to Activity 1 (Native Habitat Restoration, Enhancements, and Improvements).

- Move \$30,560 from travel to personnel
- Move \$31,889 from travel to contracts
- Move \$4,000 from supplies to contracts

Amendment Approved by LCCMR 9/12/2022

Sixth Update as of September 1, 2022: A mosaic of wet, mesic, and dry prairie was restored on 13.5 acres at Mound Spring Prairie SNA. Woody and herbaceous invasives control has occurred on 1,237 acres at 35 SNAs. A mix of prescribed disturbance activities (prescribed fire, haying & mowing) has taken place on 366 acres at 14 SNAs. Site development projects have been carried out at 9 SNAs, including 3 SNA sites where new interpretive kiosks have been installed. Partnership projects are taking place on 2 SNAs. Adaptive management plans have been completed for 5 SNA sites. Ecological and adaptive management monitoring have taken place at 48 SNAs and SNA easement monitoring has taken place on 2 SNA easements. Ecological monitoring ranges from plant community monitoring aimed to help manager's best select and time the disturbance regimes needed to improve the management of SNAs given the on-going environmental changes to specific rare species monitoring that tracks the impacts (positive or negative) of our management practices to help us adjust and improve our management practices for these species.

From July 2021 to date, 93 interpretive events have been held on SNAs across the state, including ~~13~~ 7 Self-Guided Bioblitzes which allowed participants to visit the host SNA to log observations at their convenience and in a COVID-safe manner. Many of the in-person on-site events were hosted by our volunteer Site Stewards, a community which is growing to 171 individuals volunteering their time as the designated local liaison reporting observation and assisting with land-management activities; 139 SNAs have at least one designated site steward at this time. In addition, this appropriation supported the creation and regular release of natural heritage content on the SNA Facebook page (several times per week), twice-monthly contributions of SNA content to the DNR Instagram channel, and quarterly publication of the SNA newsletter Nature Notes which were delivered to over 11,000 subscribers.

The SNA Program's interest in acquisition of a second small parcel (~30 acres) adjacent to Grey Cloud Dunes SNA remains, but it continues to take significant time to work through the steps needed for acquisition. Therefore, we will be requesting to move the Grey Cloud Dunes parcel to either the ML20 or ML21 SNA ENRTF appropriations to allow for the time we feel the acquisition will take. An amendment request to this ML19 appropriation today, requests to add a new acquisition parcel to the list. This parcel is an 80 acre mature hardwood forest--Southern Dry Mesic Oak (Red Maple) Forest, on the southwestern edge of St. Cloud and Waite Park. In addition, numerous exposed granite bedrock rock outcrops are located onsite. This acquisition is adjacent to the existing Quarry Park SNA and is within a greenbelt that also includes the City-owned Quarry Park and Nature Preserve. Acquisition during this appropriation has been challenging. Acquiring new SNAs is a very challenging endeavor to start, but adding the pandemic and staff shortages has made it even more difficult. We will continue to do our best to bring in parcels and close by June 30, 2023.

Amendment Request April 18, 2023:

- Request to change project manager from Jan Shaw Wolff to Judy Schulte. Jan was acting as project manager in the interim until a new SNA Supervisor could be hired. Judy Schulte has now been appointed as the new SNA Unit Supervisor and is taking on the role as project manager for all SNA allocations.
- Request to move \$44,550 from personnel, \$82,950 from contracts, \$13,000 from supplies, \$20,000 from professional services for acquisition and \$14,000 from travel and shift it to fee title acquisition. This request shifts extra money tied to other activities whose outcomes have been met to fee title acquisition with the hopes of utilizing it there. Two RFPs for woody removal work were put out for bids with one coming in extremely high and the other receiving no bids at all so moving these extra dollars to acquisition seems like the best route for possible use.
- Quarry Park has been held up to get mineral value reviewed as part of the appraisal. We are still hopeful to reach option but it is not certain at this time. We had anticipated needing to move the Grey Cloud Dunes acquisition to ML20 but now are more hopeful it could close in time to use this appropriation. Therefore, we would like to request a 1-year acquisition extension for this appropriation. The Grey Cloud Dunes option is attached to show that a binding contract for acquisition of the real

property is already in place. This would include a request to extend site development to post parcels acquired through this appropriation.

- Request to update Grey Cloud Dunes acres throughout the workplan documents to final anticipated total of 50 acres.
- Request to correct an error in the September 1, 2022 reporting associated to completed bioblitzes.
- Request to correct and update completion dates in the activities for this request and previous approved requests that were missed.

Amendments approved by LCCMR 5/12/23, including a one-year acquisition extension to complete the purchase of a 50-acre parcel of the Grey Cloud Dunes SNA. This extension applies to site development for the Grey Cloud Dunes site (portions of Activity 1) as well as the acquisition itself (Activity 3). Funds will expire June 30, 2024 and a final report will be submitted between June 30, 2024 and August 15, 2024.

Seventh Update as of April 1, 2023: A mosaic of wet, mesic, and dry prairie was restored on 13.5 acres at Mound Spring Prairie SNA. Woody and herbaceous invasives control has occurred on 1,329 acres at 40 SNAs. A mix of prescribed disturbance activities (prescribed fire, haying & mowing) has taken place on 385 acres at 14 SNAs. Site development projects have been carried out at 13 SNAs, including 4 SNA sites where new interpretive kiosks have been installed. Partnership projects have taken place on 4 SNAs. Adaptive management plans have been completed for 5 SNA sites. Ecological and adaptive management monitoring have taken place at 57 SNAs and SNA easement monitoring has taken place on 2 SNA easements. Ecological monitoring ranges from plant community monitoring aimed to help manager's best select and time the disturbance regimes needed to improve the management of SNAs given the on-going environmental changes to specific rare species monitoring that tracks the impacts (positive or negative) of our management practices to help us adjust and improve our management practices for these species.

From July 1, 2021 to December 30, 2022, 115 interpretive events have been held on SNAs across the state, including 7 Self-Guided Bioblitzes which allowed participants to visit the host SNA to log observations at their convenience and in a COVID-safe manner. Many of the in-person on-site events were hosted by our volunteer Site Stewards, a community which is growing to 169 individuals volunteering their time as the designated local liaison reporting observation and assisting with land-management activities; 133 SNAs have at least one designated site steward at this time. In addition, this appropriation supported the creation and regular release of natural heritage content on the SNA Facebook page (several times per week), twice-monthly contributions of SNA content to the DNR Instagram channel, and quarterly publication of the SNA newsletter Nature Notes which were delivered to over 12,200 subscribers.

The Grey Cloud Dunes SNA addition has taken a quick turn and is moving faster than anticipated. This will now allow us to complete the acquisition using this appropriation after all (total of 50 acres via 2 parcels). Since an option has been signed this status update includes a request to extend this appropriation 1 more year to allow us to close. The Quarry Park addition appraisal has required a valuation of mineral interests, which is an involved assessment adding months to the appraisal process. Due to Quarry Park's location on the southwestern edge of St. Cloud and Waite Park and the mineral potential valuation required, we do anticipate the appraisal to come in high and limit how much of that acquisition can be paid for using this appropriation. Since both of these parcels are high dollar per acre parcels, we anticipate only being able to acquire 80 acres with this appropriation rather than the original 250-acre outcome goal. Acquisition during this appropriation has been challenging. Acquiring new SNAs is a very challenging endeavor to start, but adding the pandemic and staff shortages has made it even more difficult.

Amendment Request June 26, 2023:

- Request to add the Quarry Park addition and the Cannon River Turtle addition to the list of acquisition projects that can be moved towards close utilizing the same 1-year acquisition extension received for the Grey Cloud Dunes addition. Cannon River Turtle has already optioned (optioned submitted along with this request) and Quarry Park is anticipated to option prior to 6/30/2023 (option will be sent to LCCMR staff as soon as it is executed, provided it is prior to 6/30/23). This would include a request to extend site development to post parcels acquired through this appropriation.
- Request to update Cannon River Turtle acres to final anticipated total of 11 acres.
- The Quarry Park addition is a total of 80 acres, however given the cost of the project it will be pro-rated between 2-3 ENRTF appropriations, with this appropriation only being used for a smaller percentage of the acquisition (8-20%).
- If the Quarry Park addition is unable to option prior to 6/30/23, the request to work on Quarry Park with this appropriation in FY24 will be rescinded.

Amendment Request Cannon River Turtle addition approved 6/28/2023

Amendment Request Quarry Park addition approved 8/4/2023

Amendment Request September 19, 2023

Request to consolidate money in the budget to fee title acquisition. This includes moving the following to fee title acquisition for a total addition to fee title acquisition of \$260,500:

- \$154,713 from Personnel
- \$52,344 from Professional/Technical/Service Contracts
- \$5,800 from Equipment/Tools/Supplies
- \$1,548 from Printing
- \$41,766 from Travel
- \$4,329 from MNIT Adaptive Management Spatial Database upgrades

Due to Quarry Park's location on the southwestern edge of St. Cloud and Waite Park and the mineral potential valuation, the appraisal came back high and required additional approvals to make the offer. This does limit how much of that acquisition can be paid for using this appropriation and leaves SNA running extremely low on acquisition money given the current line-up of acquisition sites. This update includes an amendment request to move as much money in the budget to fee title acquisition to help support this acquisition. If approved, it is estimated that 22 acres of this 80-acre acquisition can be paid for using this appropriation, with the rest of the acres paid for with the ML20 and ML21 appropriations.

Amendment Approved by LCCMR 11/28/2023

Eighth Update as of September 19, 2023: A mosaic of wet, mesic, and dry prairie was restored on 13.5 acres at Mound Spring Prairie SNA. Woody and herbaceous invasives control occurred on 1,559 acres at 43 SNAs. A mix of prescribed disturbance activities (prescribed fire, haying & mowing) took place on 410 acres at 14 SNAs. Site development projects were completed at 14 SNAs, including 5 SNA sites where new interpretive kiosks have been installed. Ten partnership projects took place on 4 SNAs. Adaptive management plans were completed for 5 SNA sites. Ecological and adaptive management monitoring took place at 57 SNAs and SNA easement monitoring took place on 2 SNA easements. Ecological monitoring ranged from plant community monitoring aimed to help manager's best select and time the disturbance regimes needed to improve the management of SNAs given the on-going environmental changes to specific rare species monitoring that tracked the impacts (positive or negative) of our management practices to help us adjust and improve our management practices for these species.

From July 1, 2021 to December 30, 2022, 115 interpretive events were held on SNAs across the state, including 7 Self-Guided Bioblitzes which allowed participants to visit the host SNA to log observations at their convenience and in a COVID-safe manner. Many of the in-person on-site events were hosted by our volunteer Site Stewards, a community which grew to 169 individuals volunteering their time as the designated local liaison reporting observation and assisting with land-management activities; 133 SNAs had at least one designated site steward at this time. In addition, this appropriation supported the creation and regular release of natural heritage content on the SNA Facebook page (several times per week), twice-monthly contributions of SNA content to the DNR Instagram channel, and quarterly publication of the SNA newsletter Nature Notes which were delivered to over 12,200 subscribers.

The Grey Cloud Dunes SNA addition has optioned and is working towards closing (total of 50 acres via 2 parcels). The Quarry Park addition optioned on June 30, 2023 and was added to the acquisition extension request for this appropriation. Due to Quarry Park's location on the southwestern edge of St. Cloud and Waite Park and the mineral potential valuation, the appraisal came back high and required additional approvals to make the offer. This does limit how much of that acquisition can be paid for using this appropriation and leaves SNA running extremely low on acquisition money given the current line-up of acquisition sites. This update includes an amendment request to move as much money in the budget to fee title acquisition to help support this acquisition. If approved, it is estimated that 22 acres of this 80-acre acquisition can be paid for using this appropriation, with the rest of the acres paid for with the ML20 and ML21 appropriations. Since both of these parcels are high dollar per acre parcels, we anticipate only being able to acquire ~72 acres with this appropriation rather than the original 250-acre outcome goal. Acquisition during this appropriation has been challenging. Acquiring new SNAs is a very challenging endeavor to start, but adding the pandemic and staff shortages made it even more difficult.

Amendment Request February 28, 2024:

Request to consolidate money in the budget as we spend down the final amounts of this appropriation. This includes moving the following to professional services for acquisition for a total addition of \$16,174:

- \$10,000 from Personnel
- \$1 from Professional/Technical/Service Contracts
- \$2,173 from Equipment/Tools/Supplies
- \$2000 from Printing
- \$2000 from Travel

Also request to close out Activity 1 as signage of the new parcels will occur on alternative funding and request to update project manager's name due to a last name change.

Amendment Approved by LCCMR 7/31/2024.

Ninth Update as of April 1, 2024: A mosaic of wet, mesic, and dry prairie was restored on 13.5 acres at Mound Spring Prairie SNA. Woody and herbaceous invasives control occurred on 1,559 acres at 43 SNAs. A mix of prescribed disturbance activities (prescribed fire, haying & mowing) took place on 410 acres at 14 SNAs. Site development projects were completed at 14 SNAs, including 5 SNA sites where new interpretive kiosks have been installed. Ten partnership projects took place on 4 SNAs. Adaptive management plans were completed for 5 SNA sites. Ecological and adaptive management monitoring took place at 57 SNAs and SNA easement monitoring took place on 2 SNA easements. Ecological monitoring ranged from plant community monitoring aimed to help manager's best select and time the disturbance regimes needed to improve the management of SNAs given the on-going environmental changes to specific rare species monitoring that tracked the impacts (positive or negative) of our management practices to help us adjust and improve our management practices for these species.

From July 1, 2021 to December 30, 2022, 115 interpretive events were held on SNAs across the state, including 7 Self-Guided Bioblitzes which allowed participants to visit the host SNA to log observations at their convenience and in a COVID-safe manner. Many of the in-person on-site events were hosted by our volunteer Site Stewards, a community which grew to 169 individuals volunteering their time as the designated local liaison reporting observation and assisting with land-management activities; 133 SNAs had at least one designated site steward at this time. In addition, this appropriation supported the creation and regular release of natural heritage content on the SNA Facebook page (several times per week), twice-monthly contributions of SNA content to the DNR Instagram channel, and quarterly publication of the SNA newsletter Nature Notes which were delivered to over 12,200 subscribers.

The Grey Cloud Dunes SNA addition has optioned and is working toward closing (total of 50 acres via 2 parcels). The legal description has changed due to recent platting of the property, so the appraisal is being updated. This will necessitate updating the Option. Once the Option is amended and signed, much of the work needed to close is already complete. The title work is almost done, with closing anticipated by June 30, 2024. The other project funded by this appropriation, the addition to Quarry Park, closed on 12/23/23.

Amendment Request August 13, 2024:

Request to move \$104 from Professional Services for Acquisition to Personnel.

Amendment Approved September 16, 2024

Overall Project Outcomes and Results: Minnesota’s Scientific and Natural Areas (SNAs) are public lands representing the state’s best hope for protecting rare features and averting biodiversity loss. This appropriation strengthened the “science” in SNA through monitoring-based habitat enhancement, citizen-science action and outreach, and strategic acquisition to protect high-quality natural lands. Over 1,980 acres across 62 SNAs had restoration and enhancement activities take place, this includes prairie reconstruction, terrestrial and woody invasive species control, prescribed disturbance (e.g. prescribed fire, haying, grazing), and other site improvement work. Ecological, compliance, and adaptive management monitoring was completed on 57 SNAs. Knowledge gained through this monitoring will help managers and partners improve management of the native plant communities and rare species within SNAs.

From July 2021 to December 2022, 115 interpretive events were held on SNAs across the state, including 7 Self-Guided Bioblitzes which allowed participants to visit the host SNA to log observations at their convenience and in a COVID-safe manner. Many of the in-person on-site events were hosted by our volunteer site stewards, a community which grew to 169 individuals (at 133 SNAs) volunteering their time as the designated local liaison reporting observations and assisting with land-management activities.

Two additions to existing SNA’s were acquired—a 47.2-acre addition to Grey Cloud Dunes SNA (40.1 acres through this appropriation) and a 79.9-acre addition to Quarry Park SNA (22.0 acres through this appropriation). The Grey Cloud Dunes addition is a mix of dry barrens prairie, wetland, and former golf course (to be restored to native species). The Quarry Park addition is a mature hardwood forest—Southern Dry Mesic Oak (Red Maple) Forest with exposed granite rock outcrops. Through this appropriation’s support for programmatic acquisition work, around 3 other SNA acquisition projects were recruited and developed, these have now proceeded on alternative funding.

III. PROJECT ACTIVITIES AND OUTCOMES:

ACTIVITY 1 Title: Native Habitat Restoration, Enhancements and Improvements on 500 acres

Description: Native habitat restoration and site improvement activities will be completed on about 500 acres at about 25 SNAs as guided by ecological data and monitoring. Management plans will be completed for about 7 SNAs (including sites acquired through these funds). About 35 SNAs will be monitored to improve management of habitat for rare be compliance monitored. Work will begin to create a strategic long-term ecological monitoring plan. Interpretive signs-kiosks will be developed and installed at about 5 SNAs. SNA staff will provide ecological/technical guidance and on-site verification for 5 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 control and removal, site clean-up, signing, interpretive kiosks, fencing, prescribed burns (or alternative prescribed disturbance, such prescribed haying, mowing or grazing, necessary where use of fire is limited), management plan preparation, monitoring, and coordination-oversight of projects implemented by partners. 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.

ACTIVITY 1 ENRTF BUDGET: \$1,083,418

Outcome	Completion Date
1. ~10 acres of restoration of forest, prairie, & outcrop sites	06/30/2023
2. ~260 acres of woody removal & invasive species treatment	06/30/2023
3. ~230 acres of prescribed burns and other prescribed disturbance	06/30/2023
4. ~5 SNA interpretive kiosks installed AND development work on ~10 sites	04/01/2024
5. ecological/technical guidance for ~5 partnership projects	06/30/2023
6. management plans completed for ~7 SNAs	06/30/2023
7. adaptive management, ecological & conservation easement monitoring on ~35 SNAs	06/30/2023

First Update May 11, 2020: Restoration and prescribed burn planning are underway, with more work to begin in coming months. (1.3.) Prescribed burns: 1.84 miles of firebreak have been installed on 2 SNAs in preparation for planned burns. Planning for other Activity 1 outcomes is underway with work to commence in the next few months.

Second Update November 8, 2020: Planning for both restoration and prescribed burns are underway, with more work to begin with the spring field season. (1.3.) Prescribed burns: 1.84 miles of firebreak have been installed on 2 SNAs in preparation for planned burns. Planning for other Activity 1 outcomes is ongoing, with further work to commence in the spring/summer 2021 field season as permitted within the additional health and safety measures currently in place.

Third Update April 30, 2021: (1.1) Planning for restorations and (1.3) prescribed burns is underway, with nearly two miles of firebreaks installed in preparation for the prescribed burn season. (1.2) Woody invasives removal has occurred at 2 SNAs on a total of about 194 acres so far. (1.4) Site improvement development has also been carried out at 1 SNA. Planning for other Activity 1 outcomes is ongoing, with further work to commence in the spring/summer 2021 field season as permitted within the additional health and safety measures currently in place.

Fourth Update November 5, 2021: (1.1) Planning for restorations is underway, with 26 acres of prairie seed collection having occurred on two SNAs for upcoming restoration planting. (1.3) Similarly, planning for prescribed burns is underway, with nearly two miles of firebreaks installed in preparation for the prescribed burn season. In addition, over 175 acres on 5 prairie and outcrop SNAs were treated with prescribed haying techniques, as an alternative form of prescribed disturbance in lieu of burns. In general, narrowing burn windows remained a challenge this field season with historic drought as well as increased COVID safety procedures requiring that even more conditions be met (e.g. low county positivity rates, etc.). Burn planning for

spring 2022 continues in the hopes of a wider number of burn day opportunities, but staff continue to look for opportunities where such alternative form of prescribed disturbance are appropriate to site management objectives. (1.2) Woody invasives removal has occurred on 261 acres at 4 SNAs, while herbaceous invasives have been treated on nearly 95 acres at 11 SNAs, for a total of about 356 acres at 14 SNAs – with another ~10 acres of invasives removal planned or initiated on another 3 SNAs on this appropriation. (1.4) Site development projects have also been carried out at 4 SNAs, including 3 SNA sites where new interpretive kiosks have been installed. (1.6) Adaptive management plans are currently underway or planned for 7 SNA sites. Planning for other Activity 1 outcomes is ongoing, with further work to progress in the 2022 field season as permitted within the additional health and safety measures currently in place.

Fifth Update April 2, 2022: (1.1) Planning for restorations is underway, with 26 acres of prairie seed collection having occurred on two SNAs for upcoming restoration planting. (1.3) Similarly, planning and preparation for the spring prescribed burn season is in full swing, with nearly 19 miles of firebreaks having been installed on 14 SNAs in hopes of a season of favorable conditions. In complement to prescribed burn acres however, over 175 acres on 5 prairie and outcrop SNAs were treated with prescribed haying techniques, as an alternative form of prescribed disturbance in lieu of burns. (1.2) Woody invasives removal has occurred on 458 acres at 7 SNAs, while herbaceous invasives have been treated on 106 acres at 15 SNAs, for a total of about 565 acres at 20 SNAs. (1.4) Site development projects have also been carried out at 7 SNAs, including 3 SNA sites where new interpretive kiosks have been installed. (1.6) Adaptive management plans are currently underway or planned for 7 SNA sites. Planning for other Activity 1 outcomes is ongoing, with further work to progress in the 2022 field season as permitted within the additional health and safety measures currently in place.

Update as of June 30, 2022:

Project extended to June 30, 2023 by LCCMR 6/30/22 as a result of M.L. 2022, Chp.94, Sec. 2, Subd. 19, legislative extension criteria being met.

Sixth Update as of September 1, 2022: (1.1) A mosaic of wet, mesic, and dry prairie was restored on 13.5 acres at Mound Spring Prairie SNA. (1.2) Woody invasives removal has occurred on 659 acres at 11 SNAs, while herbaceous invasives have been controlled on 578 acres at 30 SNAs, for a total of about 1,237 acres at 35 SNAs. (1.3) To -date, 127 acres have been prescribed burned on 9 SNAs, 194 acres have been prescribed hayed on 5 SNAs and 45 acres have been prescribed mowed at 2 SNAs for a total of 366 acres of prescribed disturbance. (1.4) Site development projects have been carried out at 9 SNAs, including 3 SNA sites where new interpretive kiosks have been installed. (1.5) Partnership projects are taking place on 2 SNAs:

1. A variety of partners are working together with SNA on a project to coordinate site management (prescribed disturbance/fire, mowing, invasives, etc.) across multiple ownerships in the area around McGregor Marsh SNA.
2. SNA staff are working with the Coastal Program to design a living shoreline at Minnesota Point SNA to help control erosion for rare native plant communities and a variety of rare plant and animal species.

(1.6) Adaptive management plans have been completed for 5 SNA sites. Two additional plans are in the works with a goal to complete them by 6/30/2023. (1.7) To-date, ecological and adaptive management monitoring has taken place at 48 SNAs and SNA easement monitoring has taken place on 2 SNA easements. Ecological monitoring ranges from plant community monitoring aimed to help manager's best select and time the disturbance regimes needed to improve the management of SNAs given the on-going environmental changes to specific rare species monitoring that tracks the impacts (positive or negative) of our management practices to help us adjust and improve our management practices for these species.

Seventh Update as of April 1, 2023: (1.1) A mosaic of wet, mesic, and dry prairie was restored on 13.5 acres at Mound Spring Prairie SNA. (1.2) Woody invasives removal has occurred on 730 acres at 14 SNAs, while herbaceous invasives have been controlled on 599 acres at 36 SNAs, for a total of about 1,329 acres at 40 SNAs.

(1.3) To -date, 127 acres have been prescribed burned on 9 SNAs, 213 acres have been prescribed hayed on 5 SNAs and 45 acres have been prescribed mowed at 2 SNAs for a total of 385 acres of prescribed disturbance.

(1.4) Site development projects have been carried out at 13 SNAs, including 4 SNA sites where new interpretive kiosks have been installed. (1.5) Partnership projects are taking place on 2 SNAs:

1. A variety of partners are working together with SNA on a project to coordinate site management (prescribed disturbance/fire, mowing, invasives, etc.) across multiple ownerships in the area around McGregor Marsh SNA.
2. SNA staff are working with the Coastal Program to design a living shoreline at Minnesota Point SNA to help control erosion for rare native plant communities and a variety of rare plant and animal species.
3. SNA partnered with the Friends of the Mississippi River to conduct several management activities in 2022. This included 18 acres of invasive woody removal, 4 acres of woody mowing in oak savanna, removal of garlic mustard over a 2-acre area, removal of knapweed over a 2 acre area, and spot treatment/spot mowing of invasive weeds in restored prairie.
4. SNA partnered with the Friends of the Mississippi River who coordinated and conducted work at Hastings Sand Coulee SNA in 2022. Activities included a 6-acre prescribed burn and 1 acre of hand pulled garlic mustard.

(1.6) Adaptive management plans have been completed for 5 SNA sites. Two additional plans are in the works with a goal to complete them by 6/30/2023. (1.7) To-date, ecological and adaptive management monitoring has taken place at 57 SNAs and SNA easement monitoring has taken place on 2 SNA easements. Ecological monitoring ranges from plant community monitoring aimed to help manager's best select and time the disturbance regimes needed to improve the management of SNAs given the on-going environmental changes to specific rare species monitoring that tracks the impacts (positive or negative) of our management practices to help us adjust and improve our management practices for these species.

Eighth Update as of September 19, 2023: (1.1) A mosaic of wet, mesic, and dry prairie was restored on 13.5 acres at Mound Spring Prairie SNA. (1.2) Woody invasives removal occurred on 751 acres at 17 SNAs, while herbaceous invasives were controlled on 808 acres at 39 SNAs, for a total of about 1,559 acres at 43 SNAs. (1.3) 133 acres were prescribed burned on 10 SNAs, 232 acres were prescribed hayed on 5 SNAs and 45 acres were prescribed mowed at 2 SNAs for a total of 410 acres of prescribed disturbance. (1.4) Site development projects were carried out at 14 SNAs, including 5 SNA sites where new interpretive kiosks have been installed. (1.5) 10 Partnership projects took place on 4 SNAs:

1. A variety of partners are working together with SNA on a project to coordinate site management (prescribed disturbance/fire, mowing, invasives, etc.) across multiple ownerships in the area around McGregor Marsh SNA.
2. SNA staff are working with the Coastal Program to design a living shoreline at Minnesota Point SNA to help control erosion for rare native plant communities and a variety of rare plant and animal species.
3. SNA partnered with the Friends of the Mississippi River to conduct several management activities at Pine Bend Bluffs SNA. This included 18 acres of invasive woody removal, 4 acres of woody mowing in oak savanna, removal of garlic mustard over a 2-acre area, removal of knapweed over a 2-acre area, and spot treatment/spot mowing of invasive weeds in restored prairie. Additionally, SNA partnered with Friends of the Mississippi River in the spring of 2023 to hire Great River Greening to complete a 12-acre burn.
4. SNA partnered with the Friends of the Mississippi River who coordinated and conducted work at Hastings Sand Coulee SNA in 2022. Activities included a 6-acre prescribed burn and 1 acre of hand pulled garlic mustard.

(1.6) Adaptive management plans were completed for 7 SNA sites. (1.7) Ecological and adaptive management monitoring took place at 57 SNAs and SNA easement monitoring has taken place on 2 SNA easements. Ecological monitoring ranges from plant community monitoring aimed to help manager's best select and time the

disturbance regimes needed to improve the management of SNAs given the on-going environmental changes to specific rare species monitoring that tracks the impacts (positive or negative) of our management practices to help us adjust and improve our management practices for these species.

Final Report Summary (as of April 1, 2024): (1.1) A mosaic of wet, mesic, and dry prairie was restored on 13.5 acres at Mound Spring Prairie SNA. (1.2) Woody invasives removal occurred on 751 acres at 17 SNAs, while herbaceous invasives were controlled on 808 acres at 39 SNAs, for a total of about 1,559 acres at 43 SNAs. (1.3) 133 acres were prescribed burned on 10 SNAs, 232 acres were prescribed hayed on 5 SNAs and 45 acres were prescribed mowed at 2 SNAs for a total of 410 acres of prescribed disturbance. (1.4) Site development projects were carried out at 14 SNAs, including 5 SNA sites where new interpretive kiosks have been installed. (1.5) 10 Partnership projects took place on 4 SNAs:

1. A variety of partners are working together with SNA on a project to coordinate site management (prescribed disturbance/fire, mowing, invasives, etc.) across multiple ownerships in the area around McGregor Marsh SNA.
2. SNA staff are working with the Coastal Program to design a living shoreline at Minnesota Point SNA to help control erosion for rare native plant communities and a variety of rare plant and animal species.
3. SNA partnered with the Friends of the Mississippi River to conduct several management activities at Pine Bend Bluffs SNA. This included 18 acres of invasive woody removal, 4 acres of woody mowing in oak savanna, removal of garlic mustard over a 2-acre area, removal of knapweed over a 2-acre area, and spot treatment/spot mowing of invasive weeds in restored prairie. Additionally, SNA partnered with Friends of the Mississippi River in the spring of 2023 to hire Great River Greening to complete a 12-acre burn.
4. SNA partnered with the Friends of the Mississippi River who coordinated and conducted work at Hastings Sand Coulee SNA in 2022. Activities included a 6-acre prescribed burn and 1 acre of hand pulled garlic mustard.

(1.6) Adaptive management plans were completed for 7 SNA sites. (1.7) Ecological and adaptive management monitoring took place at 57 SNAs and SNA easement monitoring has taken place on 2 SNA easements. Ecological monitoring ranges from plant community monitoring aimed to help manager’s best select and time the disturbance regimes needed to improve the management of SNAs given the on-going environmental changes to specific rare species monitoring that tracks the impacts (positive or negative) of our management practices to help us adjust and improve our management practices for these species.

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

Description: More Minnesotans will be involved in volunteer habitat conservation and education activities on SNAs and in the conservation of other key natural areas. A team consisting of CCM individual placements, SNA field naturalists, an outreach coordinator and a part-time site steward coordinator made possible through this funding will: sustain a network of 130 SNA volunteer site stewards who help care for SNAs and organize about 70 events focusing volunteer work days, recreation-educational events (guided nature hikes, etc.), and citizen science monitoring and bio-blitzes. 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 may be established on sites of high biodiversity significance to promote conservation of natural areas owned by others.

ACTIVITY 2 ENRTF BUDGET: \$475,851

Outcome	Completion Date
1. SNA website, e-book, social media, maps & other interpretive info	06/30/2023
2. ~ 70 citizen science & volunteer events (management work days & ed. events)	06/30/2023
3. network of volunteer site stewards at ~130 SNAs	06/30/2023

First Update May 11, 2020: Work in this activity is still being completed with earlier appropriations; Planning for these activities on this appropriation is taking place with work to begin in the near future.

Second Update November 8, 2020: Work in this activity is still being completed with earlier appropriations; Planning for these activities on this appropriation is taking place with work to begin in the near future.

Third Update April 30, 2021: Work in this activity is still primarily being completed with earlier ENRTF SNA appropriations; Planning for these activities on this appropriation is taking place with work to begin in the new Fiscal Year.

Fourth Update November 5, 2021: Work in this activity area began spending on this ML19 appropriation as of July 1, 2021. 2a. The SNA website is updated regularly with additions of new or edited content and a frequently updated events calendar. The 43rd (Fall 2021) issue of the *Nature Notes* e-newsletter was delivered to 10,046 subscribers. The SNA Facebook channel has achieved 8,021 page likes and 8,760 followers by end of October 2021, with a highest monthly reach in February 2021 of 72,406. The SNA Program has also begun contributing content to Instagram, with posts twice per month to the DNR's agency-wide Instagram channel. The SNA Flickr social media channel, used to encourage high quality photo sharing, has 102 members and over 1,110 photos. 2b. From July through October 2021, 39 stewardship and/or interpretive events were held on SNAs across the state, including several which were Self-Guided Bioblitzes allowing participants to visit the highlighted SNA anytime over the course of a period of a couple weeks, to log their observations and participate in the on-site event (or help identify other users' species observations from home) as their time allows and in a COVID-safe manner. 2c. To date, 142 SNAs (which is ~84% of all designated SNAs) have one or more volunteer stewards who report observations and assist with management tasks, with a total of 159 individual volunteers officially serving in this capacity. There are also six additional applicants to be new SNA site stewards whose applications are pending! Contracts with Conservation Corps of Minnesota & Iowa (CCMI) facilitate much of the SNA social media and volunteers/site stewards work.

Fifth Update April 2, 2022: 2a. The SNA website is updated regularly with additions of new or edited content and a frequently updated events calendar. The 45th (Spring 2022) issue of the *Nature Notes* e-newsletter was delivered to 10,519 subscribers. The SNA Facebook channel has over 8,800 followers at present, with the highest monthly reach in February 2022 at 51,753. The SNA Program has also begun contributing content to Instagram, with posts twice per month to the DNR's agency-wide Instagram channel. The SNA Flickr social media channel, used to encourage high quality photo sharing, has 105 members and over 1,195 photos. 2b. Thanks to this appropriation, 49 interpretive events have been held on SNAs from July 2021 to present, including several self-guided Bioblitzes that were each held on a distinct SNA over the summer/fall of 2021, open for a couple weeks at a time for participants to visit the SNA and participate in the event on their own schedule and in a pandemic-safe way. 2c. To date, 139 SNAs (which is ~83% of all designated SNAs) have one or more volunteer Site Stewards who report observations and assist with management tasks, with a total of 171 individual volunteers officially serving in this capacity. Our six new Site Steward applicants have largely completed their required training and are up and running with their new volunteer responsibilities! Look for their field reports and testimonials in future *Nature Notes* SNA e-newsletters. Contracts with Conservation Corps of Minnesota & Iowa (CCMI) facilitate much of the SNA social media and volunteers/site stewards work.

Update as of June 30, 2022:

Project extended to June 30, 2023 by LCCMR 6/30/22 as a result of M.L. 2022, Chp.94, Sec. 2, Subd. 19, legislative extension criteria being met.

Sixth Update as of September 1, 2022: 2a. From July 1, 2021 until present, this appropriation was used to regularly update the SNA website with additions of new or edited content and to frequently update the events calendar. Four issues (Fall 2021, Winter 2021, Spring 2022, Summer 2022) of the *Nature Notes* e-newsletters

were delivered to 11,050 subscribers. During this time, the SNA Facebook channel has grown to over 9,200 followers, with the highest monthly reach in April 2022 at 106,212. The SNA Program also begun contributing content to Instagram, with posts twice per month to the DNR's agency-wide Instagram channel. The SNA Flickr social media channel, used to encourage high quality photo sharing, has 108 members and over 1,525 photos. 2b. Thanks to this appropriation, 93 interpretive and stewardship events were held on SNAs from July 2021 to present, including 7 self-guided bioblitzes during the 2022 growing seasons. 2c. Currently, 139 SNAs (which is ~83% of all designated SNAs) have one or more volunteer Site Stewards who report observations and assist with management tasks, with a total of 171 individual volunteers officially serving in this capacity. Contracts with Conservation Corps of Minnesota & Iowa (CCMI) facilitate much of the SNA social media and volunteers/site stewards work.

Seventh Update as of April 1, 2023: 2a. From July 1, 2021 until December 31, 2022, this appropriation was used to regularly update the SNA website with additions of new or edited content and to frequently update the events calendar. Six issues (Fall 2021, Winter 2021, Spring 2022, Summer 2022, Fall 2022, Winter 2022) of the Nature Notes e-newsletters were delivered to 12,200 subscribers. During this time, the SNA Facebook channel has grown to over 9,400 followers, with the highest monthly reach in April 2022 at 106,212. The SNA Program contributed content to Instagram, with posts twice per month to the DNR's agency-wide Instagram channel. The SNA Flickr social media channel, used to encourage high quality photo sharing, has 115 members and over 1,562 photos. 2b. Thanks to this appropriation, 115 interpretive and stewardship events were held on SNAs from July 2021 to present, including 7 self-guided bioblitzes during the 2022 growing seasons. 2c. As of December 31, 2022, 133 SNAs (~83% of all designated SNAs) have one or more volunteer Site Stewards who report observations and assist with management tasks, with a total of 169 individual volunteers officially serving in this capacity. Contracts with Conservation Corps of Minnesota & Iowa (CCMI) facilitate much of the SNA social media and volunteers/site stewards work.

Final Report Summary (as of June 30, 2023): 2a. From July 1, 2021 until December 31, 2022, this appropriation was used to regularly update the SNA website with additions of new or edited content and to frequently update the events calendar. Six issues (Fall 2021, Winter 2021, Spring 2022, Summer 2022, Fall 2022, Winter 2022) of the Nature Notes e-newsletters were delivered to 12,200 subscribers. During this time, the SNA Facebook channel has grown to over 9,400 followers, with the highest monthly reach in April 2022 at 106,212. The SNA Program contributed content to Instagram, with posts twice per month to the DNR's agency-wide Instagram channel. The SNA Flickr social media channel, used to encourage high quality photo sharing, has 115 members and over 1,562 photos. 2b. Thanks to this appropriation, 115 interpretive and stewardship events were held on SNAs from July 2021 to December 31, 2022 including 7 self-guided bioblitzes during the 2022 growing seasons. 2c. As of December 31, 2022, 133 SNAs (~83% of all designated SNAs) had one or more volunteer Site Stewards who report observations and assist with management tasks, with a total of 169 individual volunteers officially serving in this capacity. Contracts with Conservation Corps of Minnesota & Iowa (CCMI) facilitated much of the SNA social media and volunteers/site stewards work completed through this appropriation.

ACTIVITY 3 Title: Strategic Acquisition of Sites with Biodiversity Significance – 300 acres

Description: Acquisition and designation of about 300 acres as state SNAs will protect and buffer the most important MBS-recommended sites of biodiversity significance with landowners willing to sell. Proactive landowner contacts will be targeted in 8 high priority opportunity areas identified in the SNA Strategic Plan, including prairie core areas in the Minnesota Prairie Conservation Plan. In order 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. Candidate sites are numerically evaluated with priority to MBS-mapped biodiversity significance sites that are predominantly MBS-mapped native plant communities with habitat for rare species and Species in Greatest Conservation Need. The attached map and acquisition list identifies priority projects for this appropriation. The DNR may request to add other qualifying sites to the list. Most acquisition will be of fee title, but if more appropriate, acquisition could be a SNA-administered conservation easement with SNA designation. New to the parcel list, is the addition of specific sites currently

protected via permanent conservation easements that fall into SNA’s Strategic Protection Plan. The rare features and unique plant communities on these sites would greatly benefit from the protection and management opportunities provided by SNA and would add great value to SNA goals and mission. If acquired, an appraisal would be utilized to find the fair market value of the land including current encumbrances such as conservation easements. New MBS and other scientific data will be incorporated into the SNA Strategic Plan GIS maps to continue refinement and increase strategic prioritization of SNA acquisitions.

ACTIVITY 3 ENRTF BUDGET: \$1,940,731

Outcome	Completion Date
1. acquisition as SNA of ~250 acres of high quality habitat	06/30/2024

First Update May 11, 2020: Work in this activity is still being directed toward completion of previous appropriations’ acquisitions. Planning for this appropriation’s work is underway, and efforts will shift to this appropriation in next few months.

Second Update November 8, 2020: Work in this activity is still being primarily directed toward completion of previous appropriations’ acquisitions, partly due to extensions of those appropriations and partly due to real estate market volatility and the resultant challenges in recruiting projects from willing land sellers. Planning and landowner outreach for this appropriation’s work is underway, and efforts will shift to this appropriation in the next ~6 months.

Third Update April 30, 2021: Work in this activity is still being primarily directed toward completion of previous appropriations’ acquisitions, partly due to extensions of those appropriations and partly due to real estate market volatility and the resultant challenges in recruiting high-quality projects from willing land sellers. Planning and landowner outreach for this appropriation’s work is underway, and acquisition work will shift to this appropriation in the coming Fiscal Year.

Fourth Update November 5, 2021: As part of DNR’s initiative to protect additional acreage as part of the existing Grey Cloud Dunes SNA, negotiations have now initiated with the landowner on a “phase 2” project for a potential ~30 acres of the former golf course property north of the rail line (most of the tract that used to be the driving range). This site is within the originally-proposed project footprint as approved by LCCMR on this appropriation’s parcel list, but is advancing as a separate transaction from the ~12-acre addition south of the rail line as reported on the ML18 SNA ENRTF appropriation. Outreach and project development is occurring for other listed SNA acquisition projects, but it is difficult to determine at this time which of these projects, if any, will be nearing a binding contract by the end of the current Fiscal Year for use of this appropriation’s acquisition dollars. It is important to note that the SNA Program has also been without core acquisition coordination staff since February 2020 (a member of existing staff was pulled in for a one-year detail and served in this role in a provisional, acting capacity from June 2020 to June 2021). This work is critical to the outreach, recruitment, vetting, and processing of acquisition projects and transactions. While still vacant, a hire is currently in process thanks to the lifting of the enterprise-wide hiring freeze in early FY22.

Fifth Update April 2, 2022: The SNA Program’s interest in acquisition of a second small parcel (~30 acres) adjacent to Grey Cloud Dunes SNA remains, though the appraisal process has encountered some delays. Outreach and project development is occurring for other listed SNA acquisition projects, but it is difficult to determine at this time which of these projects, if any, will be nearing a binding contract by the end of the current Fiscal Year. That is when this appropriation is currently scheduled to expire (including acquisition dollars) unless extended, whether via a COVID-related extension bill currently at the Minnesota Legislature or via the signing of binding agreements for purchase upon which to base an acquisition-related extension request. We are hopeful that a COVID extension would allow additional time to work toward completion on the complex acquisition projects this appropriation has been enabling the SNA Program to tackle. Importantly, the SNA

Program was successful in recently bringing on board its new SNA Statewide Acquisition Coordinator, on March 30th, 2022 (having gone without a permanent incumbent in this role since February 2020). This position is central to helping facilitate SNA acquisition projects through the agency real estate process, particularly as these projects are nearing critical junctures such as Option and closing.

Update as of June 30, 2022:

Project extended to June 30, 2023 by LCCMR 6/30/22 as a result of M.L. 2022, Chp.94, Sec. 2, Subd. 19, legislative extension criteria being met.

Sixth Update as of September 1, 2022: The SNA Program's interest in acquisition of a second small parcel (~30 acres) adjacent to Grey Cloud Dunes SNA remains, but it continues to take significant time to work through the steps needed for acquisition. Therefore, we will be requesting to move the Grey Cloud Dunes parcel to either the ML20 or ML21 SNA ENRTF appropriations to allow for the time we feel the acquisition will take. An amendment request to this ML19 appropriation today, requests to add a new acquisition parcel to the list. This parcel is an 80 acre mature hardwood forest--Southern Dry Mesic Oak (Red Maple) Forest, on the southwestern edge of St. Cloud and Waite Park. In addition, numerous exposed granite bedrock rock outcrops are located onsite. This makes for an uncommon combination in Central Minnesota, that is decreasing in frequency. This acquisition is adjacent to the existing Quarry Park SNA and is within a greenbelt that also includes the City-owned Quarry Park and Nature Preserve. Five species of conservation interest are located in the vicinity. Acquisition during this appropriation has been challenging. Acquiring new SNAs is a very challenging endeavor to start, but adding the pandemic and staff shortages has made it even more difficult. We will continue to do our best to bring in parcels and close by June 30, 2023.

Seventh Update as of April 1, 2023: The Grey Cloud Dunes SNA addition has taken a quick turn and is moving faster than anticipated. This will now allow us to complete the acquisition using this appropriation after all (total of 50 acres via 2 parcels). Since an option has been signed this status update includes a request to extend this appropriation 1 more year to allow us to close. The Quarry Park addition appraisal has required a valuation of mineral interests, which is an involved assessment adding months to the appraisal process. Due to Quarry Park's location on the southwestern edge of St. Cloud and Waite Park and the mineral potential valuation required, we do anticipate the appraisal to come in high and limit how much of that acquisition can be paid for using this appropriation. Since both of these parcels are high dollar per acre parcels, we anticipate only being able to acquire 80 acres with this appropriation rather than the original 250-acre outcome goal. Acquisition during this appropriation has been challenging. Acquiring new SNAs is a very challenging endeavor to start, but adding the pandemic and staff shortages has made it even more difficult.

Eighth Update as of September 19, 2023: The Grey Cloud Dunes SNA addition has optioned and is working towards closing (total of 50 acres via 2 parcels). The Quarry Park addition optioned on June 30, 2023 and was added to the acquisition extension request for this appropriation. Due to Quarry Park's location on the southwestern edge of St. Cloud and Waite Park and the mineral potential valuation, the appraisal came back high and required additional approvals to make the offer. This does limit how much of that acquisition can be paid for using this appropriation and leaves SNA running extremely low on acquisition money given the current line-up of acquisition sites. This update includes an amendment request to move as much money in the budget to fee title acquisition. If approved, it is estimated that 22 acres of this 80-acre acquisition can be paid for using this appropriation, with the rest of the acres paid for with the ML20 and ML21 appropriations. Since both of these parcels are high dollar per acre parcels, we anticipate only being able to acquire ~72 acres with this appropriation rather than the original 250-acre outcome goal. Acquisition during this appropriation has been challenging. Acquiring new SNAs is a very challenging endeavor to start, but adding the pandemic and staff shortages made it even more difficult.

Ninth Update as of April 1, 2024: The Grey Cloud Dunes SNA addition has optioned and is working toward closing (total of 50 acres via 2 parcels). The legal description has changed due to recent platting of the property, so the appraisal is being updated. This will necessitate updating the Option. Once the Option is amended and signed, much of the work needed to close is already complete. The title work is almost done, with closing anticipated by June 30, 2024. The other project funded by this appropriation, the addition to Quarry Park, closed on 12/23/23.

Due to Quarry Park's location on the southwestern edge of St. Cloud and Waite Park and the mineral potential valuation, the appraisal came back high and required additional approvals to make the offer. This did limit how much of that acquisition could be paid for using this appropriation and left SNA running extremely low on acquisition money given the current line-up of acquisition sites. Since both of these parcels are high dollar per acre parcels, we anticipate only being able to acquire 72 acres with this appropriation rather than the original 250-acre outcome goal. Acquisition during this appropriation has been challenging. Acquiring new SNAs is a very challenging endeavor to start, but adding the pandemic and staff shortages made it even more difficult.

Final Report Summary: The Grey Cloud Dunes SNA addition (LCCMR ID 24-163-001, submitted 8/14/24) closed on June 24, 2024. The completed legal survey determined final acreage to be 47.2 acres (40.1 acres of which were paid for through this appropriation).

The addition to Quarry Park (LCCMR ID 24-145-001, Submitted 8/14/24), closed on December 23, 2023 for a total of 79.9 acres (22.0 of which were paid for through this appropriation). Since both parcels are located near population centers, the appraised cost per acre was significantly higher than average, limiting the acquired acres to 62.1 acres rather than the originally proposed 250 acres (187.9 acres below original goal).

IV. DISSEMINATION:

Description: Dissemination will primarily be achieved through the SNA webpage on the DNR website: mndnr.gov/snas, through the SNA Facebook page, and through Nature Notes – the SNA Program e-newsletter distributed through GovDelivery.com to subscribers and possibly through Tweets on the DNR Twitter site. Specifically, the DNR website will be updated with information on the new or expanded SNAs. Announcements of the acquisitions and some enhancement-related activities will be posted on the SNA/DNR Facebook page.

The Minnesota Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund (ENRTF) will be acknowledged through use of the trust fund logo or attribution language on project print and electronic media, publications, signage, and other communications per the [ENRTF Acknowledgement Guidelines](#).

First Update May 11, 2020: None to date.

Second Update November 8, 2020: None to date.

Third Update April 30, 2021: The SNA website is updated regularly with new or edited content and a frequently updated events calendar. The SNA Facebook channel typically posts new content multiple times per week, highlighting program activities, partnerships, acquisitions, publications, and other topics; the page has achieved 7,707 page likes and 8,234 followers to date. The SNA Program is also contributing content twice monthly to a new DNR Instagram channel. The 41st (Spring 2021) issue of the SNA Program's *Nature Notes* e-newsletter was delivered to 9,027 subscribers, and the SNA Flickr social media channel, an online community that encourages high-quality SNA photo sharing, currently has 96 members sharing over 1,140 photos.

Fourth Update November 5, 2021: The SNA website is updated regularly with additions of new or edited content, including for new or expanded SNAs, and a frequently updated events calendar. The 43rd (Fall 2021) issue of the *Nature Notes* e-newsletter was delivered to 10,046 subscribers. The SNA Facebook channel has achieved 8,021 page likes and 8,760 followers by end of October 2021, and the SNA Program currently contributes content twice monthly to a new DNR Instagram channel. The SNA Flickr social media channel is used to encourage high-quality photo sharing, with 102 members currently sharing over 1,110 photos.

Acknowledgement of the ENRTF is included in all project communications and outreach per LCCMR's guidelines, including press releases, media interactions, signs, publications, event advertisements & invitations, websites, newsletters, printed materials, presentations, and social media.

Fifth Update April 2, 2022: The SNA website is updated regularly with additions of new or edited content, including for new or expanded SNAs, and a frequently updated events calendar. The 45th (Spring 2022) issue of the *Nature Notes* e-newsletter was delivered to 10,519 subscribers. The SNA Facebook channel has achieved over 8,800 followers at present, with the highest monthly reach in February 2021 of 51,753 instances of viewer engagement. The SNA Program also currently contributes SNA content twice monthly to the DNR Instagram channel. The SNA Flickr social media channel is used to encourage high-quality photo sharing, with 105 members currently sharing nearly 1,200 photos. Acknowledgement of the ENRTF is included in all project communications and outreach per LCCMR's guidelines, including press releases, media interactions, signs, publications, event advertisements & invitations, websites, newsletters, printed materials, presentations, and social media.

Update as of June 30, 2022:

Project extended to June 30, 2023 by LCCMR 6/30/22 as a result of M.L. 2022, Chp.94, Sec. 2, Subd. 19, legislative extension criteria being met.

Sixth Update as of September 1, 2022: From July 1, 2021 until present, this appropriation was used to regularly update the SNA website with additions of new or edited content and to frequently update the events calendar. Three issues (Fall 2021, Winter 2021, Spring 2022, Summer 2022) of the *Nature Notes* e-newsletters were delivered to 11,050 subscribers. The SNA Facebook channel has grown to over 9,200 followers, with the highest monthly reach in April 2022 at 106,212 instances of viewer engagement. During this time, the SNA Program also contributed SNA content twice monthly to the DNR Instagram channel. The SNA Flickr social media channel was used to encourage high-quality photo sharing, with 108 members and over 1,525 photos. Acknowledgement of the ENRTF was included in all project communications and outreach per LCCMR's guidelines, including press releases, media interactions, signs, publications, event advertisements & invitations, websites, newsletters, printed materials, presentations, and social media.

Seventh Update as of April 1, 2023: From July 1, 2021 until December 31, 2022 this appropriation was used to regularly update the SNA website with additions of new or edited content and to frequently update the events calendar. Six issues (Fall 2021, Winter 2021, Spring 2022, Summer 2022, Fall 2022, Winter 2022) of the *Nature Notes* e-newsletters were delivered to 12,200 subscribers. The SNA Facebook channel has grown to over 9,400 followers, with the highest monthly reach in in April 2022 at 106,212 instances of viewer engagement. During this time, the SNA Program also contributed SNA content twice monthly to the DNR Instagram channel. The SNA Flickr social media channel was used to encourage high-quality photo sharing, with 115 members and over 1,562 photos. Acknowledgement of the ENRTF was included in all project communications and outreach per LCCMR's guidelines, including press releases, media interactions, signs, publications, event advertisements & invitations, websites, newsletters, printed materials, presentations, and social media.

Eighth Update as of September 19, 2023: From July 1, 2021 until December 31, 2022 this appropriation was used to regularly update the SNA website with additions of new or edited content and to frequently update the events calendar. Six issues (Fall 2021, Winter 2021, Spring 2022, Summer 2022, Fall 2022, Winter 2022) of the *Nature Notes* e-newsletters were delivered to 12,200 subscribers. The SNA Facebook channel grew to over 9,400 followers, with the highest monthly reach in in April 2022 at 106,212 instances of viewer engagement. During this time, the SNA Program also contributed SNA content twice monthly to the DNR Instagram channel. The SNA Flickr social media channel was used to encourage high-quality photo sharing, with 115 members and over 1,562 photos. Acknowledgement of the ENRTF was included in all project communications and outreach

per LCCMR’s guidelines, including press releases, media interactions, signs, publications, event advertisements & invitations, websites, newsletters, printed materials, presentations, and social media.

Ninth Update as of April 1, 2024: From July 1, 2021 until December 31, 2022 this appropriation was used to regularly update the SNA website with additions of new or edited content and to frequently update the events calendar. Six issues (Fall 2021, Winter 2021, Spring 2022, Summer 2022, Fall 2022, Winter 2022) of the Nature Notes e-newsletters were delivered to 12,200 subscribers. The SNA Facebook channel grew to over 9,400 followers, with the highest monthly reach in in April 2022 at 106,212 instances of viewer engagement. During this time, the SNA Program also contributed SNA content twice monthly to the DNR Instagram channel. The SNA Flickr social media channel was used to encourage high-quality photo sharing, with 115 members and over 1,562 photos. Acknowledgement of the ENRTF was included in all project communications and outreach per LCCMR’s guidelines, including press releases, media interactions, signs, publications, event advertisements & invitations, websites, newsletters, printed materials, presentations, and social media.

Final Report Summary: From July 1, 2021 until December 31, 2022 this appropriation was used to regularly update the SNA website with additions of new or edited content and to frequently update the events calendar. Six issues ([Fall 2021](#), [Winter 2021](#), [Spring 2022](#), [Summer 2022](#), [Fall 2022](#), [Winter 2022](#)) of the Nature Notes e-newsletters were delivered to 12,200 subscribers. The [SNA Facebook channel](#) grew to over 9,400 followers, with the highest monthly reach in in April 2022 at 106,212 instances of viewer engagement. During this time, the SNA Program also contributed SNA content twice monthly to the [DNR Instagram channel](#). The [SNA Flickr](#) social media channel was used to encourage high-quality photo sharing, with 115 members and over 1,562 photos. Acknowledgement of the ENRTF was included in all project communications and outreach per LCCMR’s guidelines, including press releases, media interactions, signs, publications, event advertisements & invitations, websites, newsletters, printed materials, presentations, and social media.

V. ADDITIONAL BUDGET INFORMATION:

A. Personnel and Capital Expenditures

Explanation of Capital Expenditures Greater Than \$5,000: N/A

Explanation of Use of Classified Staff: Consistent with approved work plans for previous ENRTF appropriations for the SNA Program, this funding will be used to pay project-associated costs for classified and unclassified staff paid mostly with special project funds. These positions would not exist, but for special project funding received through the ENRTF and other funds. Each year these positions are assigned work based on the particular combination of soft funding available to address priority SNA Program activities.

Direct and Necessary expenses are for Department Support Services (Human Resources, IT Support, Safety, Financial Support, Communications Support, Planning Support, and Procurement Support. Department Support Services are described in the agency Service Level Agreement, and billed internally to divisions based on rates that have been developed for each area of service. These services are directly related to and necessary for the appropriation. Department leadership services (Commissioner’s Office and Regional Directors) are not assessed. Those elements of individual projects that put little or no demand on support services such as large single-source contracts, land acquisitions, and funds that are passed-thru to other entities are not assessed Direct and Necessary costs for those activities. For this work plan, landowner payments (~\$1,685,000), acquisition professional services (\$130,000), and CCM contracts (~\$101,000) have not been assessed Direct and Necessary costs. In addition to itemized costs captured in the proposal budget, direct and necessary costs cover HR/People Support (\$23,935), Safety Support (\$4,958), Financial Support (\$18,768), Communication Support (\$6,256), IT Support (\$54,209), and Planning Support (\$5,294) that are necessary to accomplishing funded programs/projects.

Total Number of Full-time Equivalents (FTE) Directly Funded with this ENRTF Appropriation:

Enter Total Estimated Personnel Hours for entire duration of project: 18,506 hours	Divide total personnel hours by 2,080 hours in 1 yr = TOTAL FTE:8.9
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Total Number of Full-time Equivalent (FTE) Estimated to Be Funded through Contracts with this ENRTF

Appropriation: How many employees a future contractor will use, the hours they will work, or what salary they may pay their employees is not known. What is known is that a full-time CCM individual placement will be hired for one year (or half-time for 2 years) and \$161,950 in contracts will be executed. If approximately 75% of the contracted dollars go towards employees at the same average cost of DNR staff working on this project, below would be a rough estimate of FTEs. This estimate includes the CCM individual placement.

Enter Total Estimated Contract Personnel Hours for entire duration of project: 8,172 hours	Divide total contract hours by 2,080 hours in 1 yr = TOTAL FTE:3.9
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VI. PROJECT PARTNERS:

A. Partners outside of project manager’s organization receiving ENRTF funding- N/A

B. Partners outside of project manager’s organization NOT receiving ENRTF funding

This proposal included funding for SNA work towards partnership project work on SNAs. Partners included entities, such as The Nature Conservancy, Friends of the Mississippi River, Great River Greening, Sugarloaf Northshore Stewardship Assn., local units of governments, and other non-profits.

VII. LONG-TERM- IMPLEMENTATION AND FUNDING:

Without SNA conservation actions, habitats for rare species, and sites of high biodiversity significance are likely to be lost forever. The SNA Strategic Land Protection Plan (of 2014) helps us target our acquisition efforts (on existing public land or through acquisition) to get the best ecological value for every dollar spent. Achieving SNA habitat management, public engagement, and acquisition goals depends upon ongoing support from the Environment and Natural Resources Trust fund of \$5M to \$10M per biennium. Annual/biennial appropriations will also be sought from the Outdoor Heritage Fund and state bonding.

VIII. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS:

- Project status update reports will be submitted April 1 and November 1 each year of the project
- A final report and associated products will be submitted between June 30 and August 15, 2024

IX. SEE ADDITIONAL WORK PLAN COMPONENTS:

- A. Budget Spreadsheet**
- B. Visual Component or Map**
- C. Parcel List Spreadsheet**
- D. Acquisition, Easements, and Restoration Requirements**
- E. Research Addendum**

Attachment A:
Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund
M.L. 2019 Budget-Final
Legal Citation: M.L. 2019, First Special Session, Chp. 4, Art. 2, Sec. 2, Subd. 09a
Project Manager: Judy Elbert
Project Title: DNR Scientific and Natural Areas
Organization: MN DNR- Scientific and Natural Areas Program
Project Budget: \$3,500,000
Project Length and Completion Date: 4 Years, June 30, 2024
Today's Date: August 14, 2024



ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES TRUST FUND BUDGET	REVISED BUDGET 3/14/24	Revised Budget 8/14/24	Amount Spent 6/30/24	Balance
BUDGET ITEM				
Personnel (Wages and Benefits):	\$ 739,577	\$ 739,681	\$ 739,681	\$ 0
Coordinators & Planner (1.78 FTE for 2-yrs)				
Specialists, Technicians, & Naturalists (4.67 FTE for 2-yrs)				
Laborers & Seasonal Field Crews (1.65 FTE for 2-yrs)				
Professional/Technical/Service Contracts -priority given to CCM; contractors to be selected following state procurement & bidding processes	\$ 281,544	\$ 281,544	\$ 281,544	\$ (0)
<i>Professional/Technical Contracts</i>				
Activity 1-6:adaptive management plan writing (~\$18,000)				
Activity 2-1: CCM individual placement (.5 FTE for 2 yrs = 1.0 FTE total) (\$38,000)				
Activity 2-2: contracted volunteer events (~\$5,000)				
<i>Service Contracts</i>				
Activity 1-2: woody encroachment removal & invasives treatment (~\$108,950)				
Activity 1-3: prescribed burning, haying, mowing, browsing or grazing (~20,000)				
Activity 1-4: site development (fences, signs, etc) (~\$10,000)				
Equipment/Tools/Supplies				
Activity 1: parts, tools, repair costs & supplies for restoration, invasives treatment, prescribed burning, etc (this is largely for SNA tools, such as chain saws, pump cans, drip torches, fire racks, pulaskis, other handtools, backpack sprayers, portable pumps & hose, personal protective equipment, etc, & supplies such as herbicides, spreading oils, flagging, stakes, etc) (~\$24,200); signs (entry,boundary, interpretive & rules signs), posts/hardware, fencing, gravel, & other site development tools & supplies (~\$30,090). Activity 2: citizen science, volunteer events & site steward supplies (including safety items, hand tools, training materials, temporary signs, stamps, envelops, etc) (~\$10,500).	\$ 39,817	\$ 39,817	\$ 39,817	\$ 0
Fee Title Acquisition				
~300 acres in 5-7 parcels to be acquired by DNR & designated SNA. Primarily fee title (possibly conservation easement)	\$ 2,120,000	\$ 2,120,000	\$ 2,119,950	\$ 50
Professional Services for Acquisition				
Includes real estate transaction costs & LAM billings; appraisal & review; boundary survey; attorney general; closing costs; recording fees & taxes; etc. ~\$130,000	\$ 126,174	\$ 126,070	\$ 124,747	\$ 1,323
Printing				
Activity 1: printing of interpretive signs (~\$2,000); Activity 2: brochure, maps, pocket cards, citizen science, educational & volunteer materials (\$3,900).Activity 3: State Register publication (required to designate acquired parcels) (\$1,000)	\$ 3,352	\$ 3,352	\$ 3,352	\$ (0)
Travel expenses in Minnesota				
Fleet charges for trucks, cars, & equipment (e.g. skid loaders, tractors, mowers, seeders), mileage, lodging & meals as per state contracts	\$ 73,445	\$ 73,445	\$ 72,725	\$ 720
Other				
Activity 1- MNIT Adaptive Management Spatial Database upgrades	\$ 2,671	\$ 2,671	\$ 2,671	\$ -
Activity 2-1: Conservation Corps Mn individual placement MNIT computer rental/support and office supplies			\$ -	\$ -
DNR's direct and necessary costs (\$113,420 total) pay for activities that are directly related to and necessary for accomplishing appropriated programs/projects. In addition to itemized costs captured in our proposal budget, direct and necessary costs cover HR/People Support (\$23,935), Safety Support (\$4,958), Financial Support (\$18,768), Communication Support (\$6,256), IT Support (\$54,209), and Planning Support (\$5,294) that are necessary to accomplishing funded programs/projects.	\$ 113,420	\$ 113,420	\$ 95,405	\$ 18,015
COLUMN TOTAL	\$ 3,500,000	\$ 3,500,000	\$ 3,479,892	\$ 20,108

OTHER FUNDS CONTRIBUTED TO THE PROJECT	Status (secured or pending)	Budget	Spent	Balance
Non-State: Potential partial landowner & partner donations; any actual \$\$ would be reported & accomplishments pro-rated.		\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
State: Some SNA acquisitions 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.		\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
In kind: DNR office facilities, copiers, computer, communications; supervisor & manager time (but contributions not tracked).		\$ -	\$ -	\$ -

PAST AND CURRENT ENRTF APPROPRIATIONS	Amount legally obligated but not yet spent	Budget	Spent	Balance
Current appropriations:	\$ 788,752	\$ 6,250,000	\$ 918,202	\$ 5,331,798
ML16 SNA Mn Point Pine Forest SNA Acquisition \$500,000. Balance: \$11,589 Encumb. & \$438,219 unexpended				
ML17 SNA Acquisition, Restoration, Citizen Science & Engagement \$2,500,000 Balance: \$488,540 Encumbered & \$1,247,219 unexpended				
ML18 SNA Habitat Restoration, Public Engagement, and Strategic Acquisition \$3,250,000. Balance: \$288,623 Encumb. & unexpended \$2,668,002				
Past appropriations:		\$ 9,426,000	\$ 9,426,000	\$ -

SNA Conservation, Restoration, Enhancement & Citizen Engagement \$1,500,000 (complete)
ML14 SNA Acquisition, Restoration, Improvements & Citizen Engagement \$2,540,000 (complete)
ML15 SNA Acquisition, Restoration, Enhancement & Public Engagement \$4,000,000 (complete)
ML16 SNA Restoration \$1,286,000 (complete)

Attachment C:

Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund

M.L. 2019 Acquisition/Restoration Parcel List Final Report

Project Title: DNR Scientific and Natural Areas

Legal Citation: M.L. 2019, First Special Session, Chp. 4, Art. 2, Sec. 2, Subd. 09a

Project Manager: Judy Elbert

Organization: MN DNR- Scientific and Natural Areas Program

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

M.L. 2018 ENRTF Appropriation: \$3,500,000

Project Length and Completion Date: 4 years, June 30, 2024

Today's Date: August 14, 2024



#	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	Anoka Sand Plain Groundwater Influenced Shallow Wetlands	44° 20' 13.0"	93° 7' 26.6"	\$ 300,000	\$ 2,250	Anoka	A spatial model for the Anoka Sand Plain Ecological Subsection has identified areas likely to have groundwater influenced shallow wetland that harbor rare vascular plants such as Twisted Yellow-eyed Grass (MN-Endangered), Slimspike three-awn (MN-Endangered), and Cross-leaved Milkwort (MN-Endangered). There is potential for LCCMR funds to be matched by \$200,000 of mitigation funds to protect these areas.	fee title acquisition	30	0.25	private	DNR-SNA	proposed
2	Cannon River Turtle Preserve SNA addition	44° 34' 44.5"	92° 37' 19.4"	\$ 280,000	\$ 2,100	Goodhue	Floodplain forest of Outstanding biodiversity significance harboring rare turtles and birds.	fee title acquisition	11	0.5	private	DNR-SNA	Alternative funding used (ML21 ENRTF)
3	Chanarambie Creek SNA (new)	43° 54' 22.4"	96° 1' 51.9"	\$ 400,000	\$ 3,000	Murray	Dry hill prairie & prairie meadow (A and AB quality prairie), fee title purchase of a Native Prairie Bank.	fee title acquisition	200	0.5	private (with NPB easement)	DNR-SNA	proposed
4	Des Moines River SNA addition	43° 44' 38.5"	95° 4' 8.7"	\$ 200,000	\$ 1,500	Jackson	Buffer to SNA to aide in mgmt. of native prairie	fee title acquisition	50		private	DNR-SNA	proposed
5	Drake Woods (new)	43° 33'54.0"	94° 6' 23.51"	\$ 2,000,000	\$ 15,000	Faribault	Best intact MBS mapped hardwood forest in south central MN	fee title acquisition	300	1.5	private	DNR-SNA	proposed
6	Englund Ecotone SNA addition	45° 41' 19.3"	94° 8' 53.2"	\$ 2,148,000	\$ 16,110	Benton	Oak forest, oak savanna, sedge meadow	fee title acquisition	358		private	DNR-SNA	proposed
7	Grey Cloud Dunes SNA addition	44° 47' 30.9"	92° 57' 35.1"	\$ 1,625,000	\$ 12,188	Washington	Natural shoreline on the Mississippi River in the metro area	fee title acquisition	50	0.5	private	DNR-SNA	Closed, 40.1 acres acquired through this appropriation. LCCMR ID 24-163-001

8	Lake Bronson SNA addition	48° 44' 5.7"	96° 32' 12.2"	\$ 144,000	\$ 1,080	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	proposed
9	Mille Lacs Moraine SNA addition	46° 16' 58.3"	93° 51' 10.9"	\$ 750,000	\$ 5,625	Crow Wing	Narrow band of steep moraine ridges with mature mesic red oak forest and small lakes that provides habitat for the Red-shouldered Hawk and Cerulean Warbler.	fee title acquisition	240	1.5	private	DNR-SNA	proposed
10	Middle Fork Zumbro River Forest SNA (new)	44° 9' 8.4"	92° 48' 6.3"	\$ 1,000,000	\$ 7,500	Dodge	Sugar maple - basswood-(butternut hickory) forest	fee title acquisition	300	4	private	DNR-SNA	proposed
11	Pembina Trail Preserve SNA Addition	47° 41' 29.9"	96° 21' 30.6"	\$ 240,000	\$ 1,800	Polk	Wet prairie of outstanding biodiversity significance.	fee title acquisition	160		private	DNR-SNA	proposed
12	Roscoe Prairie SNA addition	45° 24' 54.5"	94° 41' 22.7"	\$ 240,000	\$ 1,800	Stearns	Wet prairie with rare butterfly habitat	fee title acquisition	40		private	DNR-SNA	proposed
13	Rose Dell Prairie	43° 48' 39.9"	96° 21' 14.6"	\$ 400,000	\$ 3,000	Rock	MBS-mapped prairie with rare features. May be the biggest population of Western prairie Fringed orchids on private land in the US.	fee title acquisition	80		private	DNR-SNA	proposed
14	Rock Valley Prairie SNA	44° 42' 32.1"	95° 24' 40.9"	\$ 1,000,000	\$ 7,500	Yellow Medicine	MBS-mapped prairie with rare features	fee title acquisition	150	1	private	DNR-SNA	project on hold
15	Wallace SNA (new)	46° 5' 45.7"	95° 38' 21.3"	\$ 5,425,000	\$ 37,500	Douglas and Ottertail	Large high quality sand/gravel prairie with 5 small lakes. Buy Lund 2-1 NPB and Wallace NPB in fee title.	fee title acquisition	775	3	private (with NPB easement)	DNR-SNA	proposed
16	Quarry Park SNA Addition	45° 31' 33.1"	94° 15' 5.8"	\$1,620,000	\$12,000	Stearns	MBS-mapped Southern Dry Mesic Oak (Red Maple) Forest with exposed granite rock outcrops	fee title acquisition	80	0	private	DNR-SNA	Closed, 22 acres acquired through this appropriation. LCCMR ID 24-145-001.
17	Avon Hills Forest SNA	45° 38' 7.0"	94° 30' 6.7"	\$ 44,500		Stearns	Sand gravel prairie (towards succession to oak savanna/forest)	restoration	13		public	DNR-SNA	proposed
18	Mille Lacs Moraine SNA	46° 16' 55.2"	93° 51' 11.3"	\$ 3,000		Crow Wing	Mesic hardwood forest	restoration	1		public	DNR-SNA	proposed
19	Mound Spring Prairie SNA	44° 45' 56.5"	96° 27' 2.7"	\$ 8,500		Yellow Medicine	Dry hill & mesic prairie	restoration	3		public	DNR-SNA	13.5 acres completed.
20	Sugarloaf Point SNA	47° 29' 11.4"	90° 59' 0.3"	\$ 4,500		Cook	Lake Superior shoreline	restoration	1	0.25	public	DNR-SNA	proposed

NOTES:

ML19 Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund DNR Scientific and Natural Areas

