

Final Abstract

Final Report Approved on October 23, 2024

M.L. 2020 Project Abstract

For the Period Ending June 30, 2024

Project Title: DNR Scientific and Natural Areas

Project Manager: Judy Elbert

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Funding Source:

Fiscal Year:

Legal Citation: M.L. 2021, First Special Session, Chp. 6, Art. 5, Sec. 2, Subd. 09a

Appropriation Amount: \$3,000,000

Amount Spent: \$2,868,845

Amount Remaining: \$131,155

Sound bite of Project Outcomes and Results

Protected Dry Mesic Oak (Red Maple) Forest with exposed granite outcrops home to several state Species in Greatest Conservation Need and a wide variety of other species. Restored and enhanced over 1,111 acres across 58 SNAs. Co-hosted the 2022 Natural Areas Conference with over 300 attendees from 32 states.

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 1,111 acres across 58 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 32 SNAs. Knowledge gained through this monitoring will help managers and partners improve management of the native plant communities and rare species within SNAs.

From January 2023 to December 2023, 46 interpretive events were held on SNAs across the state with nearly 1390 volunteer hours worked by over 330 volunteers, and over 2700 interpretive event attendees. Many of the in-person on-site events were hosted by our volunteer site stewards, a community which grew to 180 individuals (at 139 SNAs) volunteering their time as the designated local liaison reporting observations and assisting with land-management activities. The 2022 Natural Areas Conference, co-hosted by DNR's SNA Program, took place September 6-9th in Duluth. This conference brought in 300+ attendees from 32 states. SNA and MBS staff highlighted Minnesota SNAs and the ENRTF during 7 sub-sessions and 4 field trips.

An 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. This addition was funded by the ML19, ML20 and ML21 ENRTF SNA appropriations (41.9 acres was directly funded through this ML20 appropriation). The Quarry Park addition is a mature hardwood forest—Southern Dry Mesic Oak (Red Maple) Forest with exposed granite rock outcrops.

Project Results Use and Dissemination

The SNA website and events calendar were updated frequently. The SNA Facebook channel achieved 11,300 followers. The SNA Program contributed content to the DNR's Instagram channel, with posts twice per month to DNR's agency-wide Instagram channel. Through this appropriation, 4 issues (Spring, Summer, Fall, and Winter 2023) of the Nature Notes e-newsletters were delivered to 14,000 subscribers. Acknowledgement of the ENRTF was included in all project communications per LCCMR's guidelines.



Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund

M.L. 2020 Approved Final Report

General Information

Date: November 18, 2024

ID Number: 2020-015

Staff Lead: Michael Varien

Project Title: DNR Scientific and Natural Areas

Project Budget: \$3,000,000

Project Manager Information

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Project Reporting

Final Report Approved: October 23, 2024

Reporting Status: Project Completed

Date of Last Action: October 23, 2024

Project Completion: June 30, 2024

Legal Information

Legal Citation: M.L. 2021, First Special Session, Chp. 6, Art. 5, Sec. 2, Subd. 09a

Appropriation Language: \$3,000,000 the second year is from the trust fund to the commissioner of natural resources for the scientific and natural area (SNA) program to restore, improve, 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.

Appropriation End Date: June 30, 2024

Narrative

Project Summary: Scientific and Natural Area (SNA) habitat restoration/enhancement (~600 acres), increased public involvement, and strategic acquisition (~250 acres) will conserve Minnesota’s most unique and rare resources for everyone's benefit.

Describe the opportunity or problem your proposal seeks to address. Include any relevant background information.

Minnesota’s Scientific & Natural Areas (SNAs) are established to protect and perpetuate natural features possessing exceptional scientific or educational value, in an undisturbed natural condition. SNA designation represents the highest form of nature protection in the state; accordingly, these are the sites that meet the highest standards of quality: ratings by the Minnesota Biological Survey (MBS) of high to outstanding biodiversity significance, key habitat for rare, threatened, and endangered species, and presenting Minnesota’s flagship geologic features.

Ensuring that Minnesota’s natural heritage is not lost from any of its ecological regions, however, is a race against time: to protect just five occurrences of every native plant community (NPC) in each of the state’s ecological subsections, and three viable populations of every animal and plant species native to Minnesota, the SNA Program currently still falls short by an estimated 130,000 acres (2014 SNA Strategic Land Protection Plan). As impacts to native ecosystems from development, agricultural conversion, fragmentation, human disturbance, and invasive species accelerate, compounded by climate change, natural area protection and stewardship are increasingly urgent.

What is your proposed solution to the problem or opportunity discussed above? Introduce us to the work you are seeking funding to do. You will be asked to expand on this proposed solution in Activities & Milestones.

To safeguard the state’s natural heritage for future generations, both the designation of currently unprotected areas and the attentive land stewardship of acres already under SNA protection, will be critical actions. The SNA land base must continue to proactively seek out, acquire, and protect the “gaps” in the protected area system, but it must likewise lift up the critically-important land management and stewardship work taken on by its talented staff, partners, and volunteer base with every new acre protected. Their work is needed in order to revitalize the native plant communities and habitats protected on SNAs that sometimes need prescribed disturbance, invasive species treatment or removal, and other actions to reduce or remove the factors leading to site degradation. The SNA Program continues to chart new territory in meeting these challenges with innovative solutions through partnering with the broader conservation community and by ramping up Minnesotans’ appreciation and support for protected natural spaces.

What are the specific project outcomes as they relate to the public purpose of protection, conservation, preservation, and enhancement of the state’s natural resources?

The vital mission of Minnesota’s Scientific & Natural Areas (SNAs) will be furthered through restoration and enhancement, public involvement, and strategic acquisition. About 600 acres of habitat restoration, enhancement, and site improvement activities will target SNAs threatened by invasive species and lack of natural disturbance regimes. Outreach and citizen science efforts will enhance public participation and nature-based recreation through ~45 SNA events, sustaining the network of volunteer stewards at 130 SNAs. Around 250 acres will be strategically acquired from willing sellers and designated as SNAs to protect at-risk native plant communities and wildlife habitat of state significance.

Project Location

What is the best scale for describing where your work will take place?

Statewide

What is the best scale to describe the area impacted by your work?

Statewide

When will the work impact occur?

During the Project and In the Future

Activities and Milestones

Activity 1: Native Habitat Restoration, Enhancements and Improvements

Activity Budget: \$735,899

Activity Description:

Native habitat restoration and site improvement activities will be completed on about 580 acres at approximately 25 SNAs. Management plans will be completed for about 4 SNAs (including sites acquired through these funds). Around 30 SNAs will be monitored to improve management and track changes to rare species, imperiled plant communities and other important protected features. SNA staff will provide ecological/technical guidance and on-site verification for 3 projects implemented by partners on SNAs. Restoration and improvement activities will be carried out by DNR staff, Conservation Corps of Minnesota and Iowa (CCMI), Sentence to Service, volunteers, and/or contractors, and will be tracked in the Adaptive Management Spatial Database (AMSD). Activities include seed collection; site preparation; planting and aftercare; invasive species early detection, control and removal; site clean-up, signing, interpretive kiosks, and fencing; and prescribed burns (or alternative prescribed disturbance, such as prescribed haying, mowing or grazing, necessary where use of fire is limited). This activity includes work to bring acquired parcels up to DNR’s minimum standards for SNAs, and includes restoration and improvements of acquired sites if ecologically advisable and feasible within the appropriation period.

Activity Milestones:

Description	Approximate Completion Date
Adaptive management, ecological & conservation easement monitoring on ~30 SNAs	June 30, 2024
Management plans completed for ~4 SNAs	June 30, 2024
Ecological/technical guidance for ~3 partnership projects	June 30, 2024
~1 SNA interpretive kiosks installed and development work on ~16 sites	June 30, 2024
~400 acres of prescribed burns	June 30, 2024
~170 acres of woody removal & invasive species treatment	June 30, 2024
~10 acres of restoration of forest, prairie, & outcrop sites	June 30, 2024

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

Activity Budget: \$419,822

Activity Description:

Minnesotans will be involved in volunteer habitat conservation and education activities at SNAs, and in the conservation of other key natural areas statewide. A network of ~130 SNA volunteer site stewards will be sustained, and 45+ events organized and executed (volunteer work days, recreation-educational events, guided nature hikes, citizen science monitoring, Bio-blitzes, etc.) to further engage Minnesotans. 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 recreation on SNAs. Natural Area Registry partnership promotion will be part of this outreach, to further conservation of other public natural areas. In September 2021 Minnesota hosts the Natural Areas Conference in Duluth, which brings natural resource professionals from across the nation and globe to Minnesota to share new research, evaluate best management practices, and develop ongoing connections. The Natural Areas Association (NAA), a national nonprofit dedicated to the advancement of the community of natural areas practitioners, is the fiscal agent and coordinates logistics (DNR generates no income). This appropriation allows SNA to contribute expertise on Minnesota’s natural areas to NAA and conference-attendees (as field trips, presentations, etc.)

Activity Milestones:

Description	Approximate Completion Date
SNAs and rare features highlighted at 2021 Natural Areas Conference through field trips, presentations, displays	June 30, 2024
Network of volunteer site stewards at ~130 SNAs	June 30, 2024
SNA website, e-book, social media, maps & other interpretive info	June 30, 2024
~45 citizen science & volunteer events (management work days & ed. events incl. online)	June 30, 2024

Activity 3: Strategic Acquisition of Sites with Biodiversity Significance

Activity Budget: \$1,844,279

Activity Description:

Acquisition and designation of ~40 acres as state SNAs will protect and buffer the most important Minnesota Biological Survey (MBS) designated sites of biodiversity significance. Proactive landowner contacts will target SNA Strategic Plan priority areas, including MN Prairie Conservation Plan priority areas. Acquired sites must be recommended through an Ecological Evaluation report and numerically evaluated to ensure prioritization of MBS biodiversity significance sites that are predominantly MBS native plant communities with habitat for rare, threatened and endangered species and Species in Greatest Conservation Need. Most acquisition will be of fee title, but if more appropriate, acquisition could be a SNA-administered conservation easement with SNA designation. Included on the parcel list, are specific sites currently protected via permanent conservation easements that fall into SNA’s Strategic Plan. The rare features and unique plant communities on these sites would benefit from the protection and management provided by SNA and would add great value to SNA goals and mission. If acquired, an appraisal would be used to find the fair market value including current encumbrances such as conservation easements. New MBS/other scientific data will be incorporated into the SNA Strategic Plan to refine and increase strategic prioritization.

Activity Milestones:

Description	Approximate Completion Date
acquisition and designation as SNA of ~40 acres of high quality habitat	June 30, 2024

Dissemination

Describe your plans for dissemination, presentation, documentation, or sharing of data, results, samples, physical collections, and other products and how they will follow ENRTF Acknowledgement Requirements and Guidelines.

Information about the work funded by this appropriation and its value to Minnesotans will be disseminated and publicized in a variety of ways: on the SNA webpage on the DNR website (mndnr.gov/snas), through the SNA Facebook page, via "Nature Notes" (the SNA Program e-newsletter) distributed through GovDelivery.com to subscribers, on the DNR Instagram channel, on the SNA events calendar (viewable online and distributed to subscribers via GovDelivery), and possibly through Tweets on the DNR Twitter channel. Specifically, the DNR website will be updated with information on the new or expanded SNAs once designated, and announcements of acquisitions and some enhancement-related activities will be posted on the SNA/DNR Facebook and possibly its other social media channels.

Long-Term Implementation and Funding

Describe how the results will be implemented and how any ongoing effort will be funded. If not already addressed as part of the project, how will findings, results, and products developed be implemented after project completion? If additional work is needed, how will this work be funded?

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

Other ENRTF Appropriations Awarded in the Last Six Years

Name	Appropriation	Amount Awarded
Scientific and Natural Area Acquisition, Restoration, Improvement and Citizen Engagement	M.L. 2014, Chp. 226, Sec. 2, Subd. 07a	\$2,540,000
SNA Acquisition, Restoration, Enhancement and Public Engagement	M.L. 2015, Chp. 76, Sec. 2, Subd. 09c	\$4,000,000
Scientific and Natural Area Acquisition and Restoration	M.L. 2016, Chp. 186, Sec. 2, Subd. 09a	\$1,386,000
Minnesota Point Pine Forest Scientific and Natural Area Acquisition	M.L. 2016, Chp. 186, Sec. 2, Subd. 09b	\$500,000
Scientific and Natural Areas Acquisition, Restoration, Citizen Science and Engagement	M.L. 2017, Chp. 96, Sec. 2, Subd. 09b	\$2,500,000
Scientific and Natural Areas Program	M.L. 2018, Chp. 214, Art. 4, Sec. 2, Subd. 09I	\$3,250,000
Minnesota Scientific and Natural Areas	M.L. 2019, First Special Session, Chp. 4, Art. 2, Sec. 2, Subd. 09a	\$3,500,000

Budget Summary

Category / Name	Subcategory or Type	Description	Purpose	Gen. Ineligible	% Benefits	# FTE	Classified Staff?	\$ Amount	\$ Amount Spent	\$ Amount Remaining
Personnel										
Seasonal Laborers & crews		On the ground project implementation			20%	2.2	X	\$82,800	-	-
Coordinators & planner		Coordinate acquisition, restoration, and budget implementation, contract execution, partner coordination			25%	2.2	X	\$200,000	-	-
Specialists & Technicians		On the ground project implementation			25%	6.6	X	\$453,625	-	-
							Sub Total	\$736,425	\$733,783	\$2,642
Contracts and Services										
TBD, and CCMI (Conservation Corps of MN & IA)	Professional or Technical Service Contract	Restoration of forest, prairie, & outcrop sites; invasives removal & treatment; prescribed disturbance; site development; adaptive management planning & monitoring; contracted volunteer events; and video/photo/outreach materials (\$118,215, priority given to CCMI for all appropriate contracted work); and CCMI individual placements (\$100,000).				4.6		\$218,215	\$204,382	\$13,833
State of Minnesota	Acquisition costs	Professional Services for Acquisition: Attorney General's Office and DNR Lands and Minerals costs associated with completing an acquisition. Recent years' average is about \$40K in acquisition costs (survey, appraisal, closing fees) per parcel, but extremely variable and difficult to predict. We anticipate 2-3 parcels will be acquired with this appropriation.				0.76		\$100,000	\$36,362	\$63,638
State of Minnesota	Sub award	MNIT contract to provide ongoing upgrades and maintenance to the SNA Program's spatial outcomes tracking				0.06		\$16,000	\$13,808	\$2,192

		system, the Adaptive Management Spatial Database (AMSD)								
							Sub Total	\$334,215	\$254,552	\$79,663
Equipment, Tools, and Supplies										
	Tools and Supplies	Materials & supplies	Herbicide, posts, signs, safety supplies, equipment repair/parts, seed cleaning/testing, field tools, exclosure fence for monitoring, outreach materials, safety equipment for volunteers, etc.					\$44,770	\$43,945	\$825
							Sub Total	\$44,770	\$43,945	\$825
Capital Expenditures										
							Sub Total	-	-	-
Acquisitions and Stewardship										
	Fee Title Acquisition	Acres: 42 Parcels: 1						\$1,676,000	\$1,676,000	-
							Sub Total	\$1,676,000	\$1,676,000	-
Travel In Minnesota										
	Miles/ Meals/ Lodging	DNR fleet charges (for operation of trucks, cars, & special fieldwork equipment) & instate travel costs (as per state contracts)	Travel expenses needed to complete direct project work					\$107,100	\$59,075	\$48,025
							Sub Total	\$107,100	\$59,075	\$48,025
Travel Outside Minnesota										
							Sub Total	-	-	-

Printing and Publication										
	Printing	Printing of interpretive signs/kiosks, brochures, maps, pocket cards; citizen science, educational & volunteer materials; publication of Commissioner's Designation Orders in State Register (required to designate acquired parcels)	To achieve improved public awareness and management efficiency of SNAs, enhance outreach/citizen science experiences, and transparently disclose additions of new SNA parcels.					\$8,557	\$8,557	-
							Sub Total	\$8,557	\$8,557	-
Other Expenses										
		DNR's Direct and Necessary Costs	Pay for activities that are directly related to and necessary for accomplishing appropriated projects. Direct and necessary costs cover HR (~18,728), Safety (~3,390), Financial (~13,639), Communication (~6,939), IT (~44,547), and Planning Support (~5,691)					\$92,933	\$92,933	-
							Sub Total	\$92,933	\$92,933	-
							Grand Total	\$3,000,000	\$2,868,845	\$131,155

Classified Staff or Generally Ineligible Expenses

Category/Name	Subcategory or Type	Description	Justification Ineligible Expense or Classified Staff Request
Personnel - Seasonal Laborers & crews		On the ground project implementation	Classified : 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 almost exclusively 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.
Personnel - Coordinators & planner		Coordinate acquisition, restoration, and budget implementation, contract execution, partner coordination	Classified : 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 almost exclusively 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.
Personnel - Specialists & Technicians		On the ground project implementation	Classified : 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 almost exclusively 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.

Non ENRTF Funds

Category	Specific Source	Use	Status	\$ Amount	\$ Amount Spent	\$ Amount Remaining
State						
			State Sub Total	-	-	-
Non-State						
			Non State Sub Total	-	-	-
			Funds Total	-	-	-

Acquisition and Restoration

Parcel List

Name	County	Site Significance	Activity	Acres	Miles	Estimated Cost	Type of Landowner	Easement or Title Holder	Status of Work
Antelope Valley SNA	Yellow Medicine	Wet Saline Prairie, Upland Sandpiper noted onsite	Restoration	17	-	\$10,000	Public	DNR-SNA	Has Not Begun
Badoura Jack Pine Woodland SNA	Hubbard	Jack pine (yarrow) woodland	Restoration	23	-	\$30,000	Public	DNR-SNA	Has Not Begun
Blanket Flower SNA	Clay	Dry Gravel Prairie, inter-seeding into restoration completed through ML18 SNA appropriation	Restoration	27	0	\$5,000	Public	DNR-SNA	Completed
Boltuck-Rice Forever Wild SNA addition	Itasca	Provides better public access to the site and protects old growth forest.	Fee Title	25	0.03	\$150,000	Private	DNR-SNA	Has Not Begun
Cannon River Turtle SNA Addition	Goodhue	Inholding of current SNA, Floodplain Forest of Outstanding biodiversity significance harboring rare turtles and birds.	Fee Title	11	0	\$25,000	Private	DNR-SNA	Negotiations In Progress
Englund Ecotone SNA addition	Benton	Provides the only public access to the site and protects additional oak forest, oak savanna, and sedge meadow.	Fee Title	300	-	\$1,800,000	Private	DNR-SNA	Has Not Begun
Falls Creek SNA addition	Washington	One of the most diverse forested natural areas remaining in Washington County. Will add to core SNA habitat, protect St. Croix River frontage, fill a protection gap within the St. Croix National Scenic Riverway, and provide better public access.	Fee Title	120	0.5	\$2,400,000	Private	DNR-SNA	No Longer Being Considered
Frenchman's Bluff SNA addition	Norman	Dry Sand-gravel prairie in good condition.	Fee Title	73	-	\$511,000	Private	DNR-SNA	Has Not Begun
Grey Cloud Dunes SNA Addition	Washington	Mississippi River shoreline, dry barrens prairie. Outstanding biodiversity significance.	Fee Title	12.4	0.04	\$535,000	Private	DNR-SNA	Negotiations In Progress
Hemlock Ravine SNA	Carlton	Imperiled boreal hardwood forest: Red oak - Sugar maple - Basswood - (Bluebead lily) forest and White pine - White spruce - Paper birch forest (S2 ranked) with a state-endangered tree (Eastern hemlock). Project will	Restoration	2	-	\$10,000	Public	DNR-SNA	Has Not Begun

		continue an effort to stabilize and re-establish vegetation on eroded slide areas in the ravine.							
Hythecker Prairie SNA addition	Dodge	200 foot grassland buffer on the east and north sides of the SNA to protect prairie from overspray from agricultural fields.	Fee Title	40	-	\$320,000	Private	DNR-SNA	Has Not Begun
King and Queen's Bluff Addition	Winona	Sugar Maple-Basswood-Red Oak Forest on north-facing bluff of Mississippi River	Fee Title	1.8	-	\$15,000	Private	DNR-SNA	Has Not Begun
Lake Bronson Parkland SNA addition	Kittson	Borders the Two Rivers river and harbors rare orchids on wet prairie of outstanding biodiversity significance.	Fee Title	180	0.25	\$150,000	Private	DNR-SNA	Has Not Begun
Lester Lake SNA	Hubbard	High quality Red Pine - White Pine Forest.	Restoration	10	-	\$15,000	Public	DNR-SNA	Has Not Begun
Mille Lacs Moraine SNA	Crow Wing	Restore high-quality Red oak - Basswood forest (Noncalcareous till) with several listed bird species. Project would rehabilitate a small former building site where debris and invasive species are present.	Restoration	2	-	\$7,000	Public	DNR-SNA	Has Not Begun
Mille Lacs Moraine SNA addition	Crow Wing	MBS-mapped forest communities; Red-shouldered hawk, Cerulean warbler habitat	Fee Title	265	0.5	\$800,000	Private	DNR-SNA	Has Not Begun
Minnesota Point Pine Forest SNA	St. Louis	Restore unique and critically imperiled ecosystems eroded by storm surge: Beachgrass dune (Lake Superior), Juniper dune shrubland (Lake Superior), and Sand beach (Lake Superior), with numerous listed species; complement beach nourishment activities underway by Army Corps of Engineers.	Restoration	2	0.25	\$7,000	Public	DNR-SNA	Has Not Begun
Morton Outcrop SNA addition	Renville	Protect additional rock outcrop and mesic prairie along with additional access to site	Fee Title	3	-	\$24,000	Private	DNR-SNA	Has Not Begun
Mound Prairie SNA addition	Houston	Protect additional mesic and dry bluff prairie, and provide better management access to the SNA	Fee Title	40	-	\$200,000	Private	DNR-SNA	Has Not Begun
North Fork Zumbro SNA addition	Goodhue	Protect additional floodplain forest and improve public access.	Fee Title	68	0.5	\$476,000	Private	DNR-SNA	Has Not Begun

Quarry Park SNA Addition	Stearns	Mature hardwood forest and rock outcrops. Adjacent to Quarry Park SNA.	Fee Title	42	-	\$1,676,000	Private	DNR-SNA	Purchased
Rock Ridge SNA addition	Cottonwood	Protect additional rock outcrop prairie.	Fee Title	80	-	\$640,000	Private	DNR-SNA	Has Not Begun
Rosedale Fen SNA	Mahnomen	High quality native prairie, calcareous fen, and tamarack seepage swamp. Rare species present	Fee Title	160	0	\$100,000	Private	DNR-SNA	Negotiations In Progress
Totals				1,504.2	2.07	\$9,906,000			

Fee Acquisition

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

To be acquired and designated as SNA, the site must be recommended for SNA designation in an Ecological Evaluation report, which serves as the site's baseline assessment for fee acquisitions. All such sites are predominantly MBS-mapped native plant communities and contain habitat for rare species and Species of Greatest Conservation Need. In addition, SNA staff use the "SNA Candidate Site Evaluation Guide" (initially developed through the ENRTF-funded SNA strategic planning process) which incorporates criteria to rate which sites are currently pursued. Criteria include diversity and quality of the native habitat, occurrence of rare species, occurrence of native plant communities under-represented in SNA system, parcel size, location of parcel in relation to biodiversity hotspots (particularly MBS-mapped areas of outstanding and high biodiversity significance) and other conservation lands (including SNA Strategic Land Protection Plan's Conservation Opportunity Areas and Minnesota Prairie Conservation Plan's Core Areas), potential for long-term management, and additional factors (e.g. landowner readiness, urgency, and willingness to donate; degree of threat, and partnership opportunities).

2. List all adopted state, regional, or local natural resource plans in which the lands included in the parcel list are identified for the acquisition purposes you propose. Include the URL to the plan if one is available.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Restoration

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

6. Provide a statement indicating that evaluations will be completed on parcels where activities were implemented both 1) initially after activity completion and 2) three years later as a follow-up. Evaluations should analyze improvements to the parcel and whether goals have been met, identify any problems with the implementation, and identify any findings that can be used to improve implementation of future restoration efforts at the site or elsewhere.

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

Attachments

Required Attachments

Map

File: [badf7ab6-b61.pdf](#)

Alternate Text for Map

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

Supplemental Attachments

Capital Project Questionnaire, Budget Supplements, Support Letter, Photos, Media, Other

Title	File
2021-07-06_ENRTF-Background-Check-Certification-Form_2020-015-SNA	c28ac6fa-257.pdf
Blanket Flower SNA Restoration Evaluation	30ed4027-12b.pdf
Final Map	3292584d-416.pdf
Natural Areas Conference-SNA staffer leading tour	df6a4772-7f3.jpe
Natural Areas Conference Plenary Session	ad9c2bd3-d81.jpe
Seminary Fen Interpretive Kiosk	d7943c34-478.jpe

Media Links

Title	Link
SNA Coloring Book	https://files.dnr.state.mn.us/destinations/snas/coloring-book.pdf
SNA Events	https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/snass/events.html
Spring 2023 Nature Notes Newsletter	https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/MNDNR/bulletins/34eee3b
Summer 2023 Nature Notes Newsletter	https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/MNDNR/bulletins/35fc8be
Fall 2023 Nature Notes Newsletter	https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/MNDNR/bulletins/371114a
Winter 2023 Nature Notes Newsletter	https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/MNDNR/bulletins/37f6780

Difference between Proposal and Work Plan

Describe changes from Proposal to Work Plan Stage

MN.IT contract changed to subaward; CCMI not changed to subaward because for all contracts priority is given to CCMI, so unknown at this time the exact dollar amount of the non-IP's would be CCMI vs. a separate contractor. Similarly, Professional Services for Acquisition was not split out/itemized by appraisal, survey, closing costs, etc. because these are highly variable and virtually impossible to predict in advance, but all are subject to statute and rule governing procedures and costs, and as such we request to leave those in a unified budget category. Dissemination description added. Box for "No royalties etc." checked.

Additional Acknowledgements and Conditions:

The following are acknowledgements and conditions beyond those already included in the above workplan:

Do you understand and acknowledge the ENRTF repayment requirements if the use of capital equipment changes?

N/A

Do you agree travel expenses must follow the "Commissioner's Plan" promulgated by the Commissioner of Management of Budget or, for University of Minnesota projects, the University of Minnesota plan?

Yes, I understand the Commissioner's Plan applies.

Does your project have potential for royalties, copyrights, patents, sale of products and assets, or revenue generation?

No

Do you understand and acknowledge IP and revenue-return and sharing requirements in 116P.10?

N/A

Do you wish to request reinvestment of any revenues into your project instead of returning revenue to the ENRTF?

N/A

Does your project include original, hypothesis-driven research?

No

Does the organization have a fiscal agent for this project?

No

Work Plan Amendments

Amendment ID	Request Type	Changes made on the following pages	Explanation & justification for Amendment Request (word limit 75)	Date Submitted	Approved	Date of LCCMR Action
1	Project Manager	Previous Manager: Molly Roske (molly.roske@state.mn.us) New Manager: Jan Shaw Wolff (jan.wolff@state.mn.us)	Molly Roske is leaving her position as SNA Program Supervisor, and Jan Shaw Wolff (MN DNR/EWR Section Manager) will be stepping in as project manager on this appropriation.	August 9, 2022	Yes	August 10, 2022
2	Amendment Request	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project Collaborators - Project Manager Info • Budget - Personnel • Budget - Professional / Technical Contracts • Budget - Capital, Equipment, Tools, and Supplies • Budget - Travel and Conferences • Acquisition and Restoration - Parcel List 	Request to add 3 fee parcels and 1 restoration parcel. The restoration project is an inter-seeding into the Blanket Flower SNA restoration started through ML18. This is often done several times after an initial seeding to increase species diversity. Request to move \$60,000 from personnel to contracts and \$20,000 from travel to tools/supplies. Due to recent state hiring freeze, less personnel and travel were spent and work shifted to contracts and supplies.	December 6, 2022	Yes	December 14, 2022
3	Project Manager	Previous Manager: Jan Shaw Wolff (jan.wolff@state.mn.us) New Manager: Judy Schulte (judy.schulte@state.mn.us)	Judy is the new SNA Supervisor, replacing Molly Roske's previous roll as Project Manager. Jan Shaw Wolff was acting as Project Manager while the position was vacant.	December 6, 2022	Yes	December 6, 2022
4	Amendment Request	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget • Activities and Milestones • Budget - Personnel • Budget - Professional / Technical Contracts • Budget - Capital, Equipment, Tools, and Supplies • Budget - Acquisition • Budget - Travel and Conferences • Budget - Other • Attachments 	Request to move dollars from several account lines to fee acquisition to support acquisition of an addition to Quarry Park SNA. Due to Quarry Park's location on the edge of St. Cloud/Waite Park and the mineral potential valuation, the appraisal came back high. This amendment helps pull together additional money within the appropriation to apply towards this acquisition (and others) and lowers the	October 16, 2023	Yes	November 3, 2023

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acquisition and Restoration - Parcel List 	acre outcomes to more accurately reflect the cost per acre.			
5	Amendment Request	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget • Project Collaborators - Project Manager Info • Budget - Professional / Technical Contracts • Budget - Capital, Equipment, Tools, and Supplies • Budget - Acquisition • Budget - Travel and Conferences • Budget - Printing and Publication • Acquisition and Restoration - Parcel List 	Request to move \$12,150 from contracts to fee acquisition and \$3,715 from contracts to printing. This adjusts the budget as we spend down and come into the final months of this appropriation. Adjusted acres and funding for Quarry Park SNA addition to match final portion pro-rated to this appropriation. Request to update project manager information (same person, just updating information).	March 26, 2024	Yes	June 20, 2024
6	Project Manager	<p>Previous Manager: Judy Schulte (judy.elbert@state.mn.us) New Manager: Judy Elbert (judy.elbert@state.mn.us)</p>	Updating my last name after a name change from Judy Schulte to Judy Elbert.	March 21, 2024	Yes	March 22, 2024

Status Update Reporting

Final Status Update August 14, 2024

Date Submitted: August 15, 2024

Date Approved: October 17, 2024

Overall Update

Woody and herbaceous invasive control occurred on 418 acres at 32 SNAs. A mix of prescribed disturbance activities (prescribed fire, haying & mowing) took place on 693 acres at 16 SNAs. Site development projects were carried out at 17 SNAs and 10 interpretive kiosks were installed at 9 SNAs. Ecological monitoring took place at 32 SNAs. Four SNA site management plans/briefs have been completed.

The 2022 Natural Areas Conference, co-hosted by DNR's SNA Program, took place September 6-9th in Duluth. This conference brought in over 300 attendees from 32 states. SNA and MBS staff highlighted SNAs and the ENRTF during 7 sub-sessions and 4 field trips. During this appropriation, 139 SNAs (~82% of all designated SNAs) had one or more volunteer Site Steward who reported observations and assisted with management tasks (180 individual volunteers). From January 2023 to December 2023, the SNA website, social media, and newsletters regularly provided new content and information and 46 outreach events engaged 330 volunteers. An 80-acre Quarry Park SNA addition was acquired through funding from the ML19, ML20 and ML21 ENRTF SNA appropriations (41.9 acres directly through this ML20 appropriation).

Activity 1

1-1. Ecological monitoring activities took place at 32 SNAs. 1-2. Four SNA site management plans/briefs have been completed. 1-3. Staff coordinated with partners to implement 8 woody and herbaceous invasive control projects at 7 SNAs. 1-4. Four interpretive kiosk panels (to be installed at 2 SNAs) have been designed and purchased. 10 Interpretive kiosk panels were installed at 9 SNAs. Development work took place at 17 SNAs. 1-5. Prescribed fire (248 acres on 10 SNAs), prescribed haying (179 acres on 5 SNAs) and prescribed grazing (266 acres on 1 SNA) were completed for a total of 693 acres of prescribed disturbance. 1-6. Woody removal (161 acres on 12 SNAs) and invasive species treatment (257 acres on 22 SNAs) were completed for a total of 418 acres. 1-7. Additional seed was hand harvested and inter-seeded into a 17-acre area on Blanket Flower SNA that was restored through the ML18 appropriation.

(This activity marked as complete as of this status update)

Activity 2

2-1. The 2022 Natural Areas Conference, co-hosted by DNR's SNA Program, took place September 6-9th in Duluth. This conference brought in 300+ attendees from 32 states. SNA and MBS staff highlighted Minnesota SNAs and the ENRTF during 7 sub-sessions and 4 field trips. 2-2 through 2-4 were funded through this appropriation from January 1, 2023 to December 31, 2023. 2-2. During this year, 139 SNAs (~82% of all SNAs) had one or more volunteer Site Stewards who reported observations and assisted with management (total of 180 volunteers). 2-3. From January 1, 2023 until December 31, 2023, this appropriation was used to regularly update the SNA website with additions of new/edited content and to frequently update the events calendar. Four issues (Spring, Summer, Fall, and Winter 2023) of the Nature Notes e-newsletters was delivered to 14,000 subscribers. During this time, the SNA Facebook channel grew to over 11,300 followers. SNA contributed content to DNR's Instagram channel twice per month. A total of 46 events were implemented from January 1, 2023 to December 31, 2023 with nearly 1390 volunteer hours worked by over 330 volunteers, and over 2700 interpretive event attendees.

(This activity marked as complete as of this status update)

Activity 3

An 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. This addition was funded by the ML19, ML20 and ML21 ENRTF SNA appropriations (41.9 acres was directly funded through this ML20 appropriation). Discussions around the acquisition of Rosedale Fen are still taking place with tribal leaders and DNR leadership so it is not moving forward at this time. The Cannon River Turtle SNA addition closed in November 2023 and was funded through the ML21 ENRTF SNA appropriation. The addition to Grey Cloud Dunes closed in June 2024 and was funded through the ML19 and ML21 appropriations.

(This activity marked as complete as of this status update)

Dissemination

From January 1, 2023 until December 31, 2023, 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 (Spring, Summer, Fall, and Winter 2023) of the Nature Notes e-newsletters were delivered to 14,000 subscribers. The SNA Facebook channel grew to over 11,300 followers. During this time, the SNA Program also contributed SNA content twice monthly to the DNR Instagram channel.

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 and invitations, websites, newsletters, printed materials, presentations, and social media.

Status Update Reporting

Status Update April 1, 2024

Date Submitted: March 26, 2024

Date Approved: June 20, 2024

Overall Update

Woody and herbaceous invasives control has occurred on 369 acres at 29 SNAs. A mix of prescribed disturbance activities (prescribed fire, haying & mowing) have taken place on 658 acres at 13 SNAs. Site development projects have been carried out at 15 SNAs, including 4 SNA sites where new interpretive kiosks have been installed. Ecological monitoring has taken place at 33 SNAs. Field data has been collected and drafts initiated on 4 SNA site management plans/briefs.

The 2022 Natural Areas Conference, co-hosted by DNR's SNA Program, took place September 6-9th in Duluth. This conference brought in over 300 attendees from 32 states. SNA and MBS staff highlighted SNAs and the ENRTF during 7 sub-sessions and 4 field trips. Currently, 139 SNAs (~82% of all designated SNAs) have one or more volunteer Site Steward who report observations and assist with management tasks (180 individual volunteers). From January 2023 to December 2023, the SNA website, social media, and newsletters have regularly provided new content and information and 46 outreach events engaged 330 volunteers. An 80-acre Quarry Park SNA addition has closed and was funded by the ML19, ML20 and ML21 ENRTF SNA appropriations (41.9 acres directly through this ML20 appropriation).

Activity 1

Cumulative to-date: 1-1. Ecological monitoring activities took place at 33 SNAs. 1-2. Field data has been collected and drafts initiated on 4 SNA site management plans/briefs. 1-3. Staff coordinated with Great River Greening on a buckthorn removal project at Quarry Park SNA, worked with the Anoka Conservation District on a buckthorn removal and aspen girdling project at Blaine Preserve SNA, and partnered with the Duluth Cooperative Invasive Species Management Area (CISMA) on invasive control events held at Moose Mountain and Minnesota Point SNAs. 1-4. Four interpretive kiosk panels (to be installed at 2 SNAs) have been designed and purchased. 4 Interpretive kiosk panels were installed at 4 SNAs. Development work took place at 11 SNAs. 1-5. Prescribed fire (213 acres on 7 SNAs), prescribed haying (179 acres on 5 SNAs) and prescribed grazing (266 acres on 1 SNA) were completed for a total of 658 acres of prescribed disturbance. 1-6. Woody removal (158 acres on 11 SNAs) and invasive species treatment (211 acres on 22 SNAs) were completed for a total of 369 acres. 1-7. Additional seed was hand harvested and inter-seeded into a 17-acre area on Blanket Flower SNA that was restored through the ML18 appropriation.

Activity 2

Cumulative to-date: 2-1. The 2022 Natural Areas Conference, co-hosted by DNR's SNA Program, took place September 6-9th in Duluth. This conference brought in 300+ attendees from 32 states. SNA and MBS staff highlighted Minnesota SNAs and the ENRTF during 7 sub-sessions and 4 field trips. 2-2 through 2-4, transitioned to this appropriation January 1, 2023. 2-2. Currently, 139 SNAs (~82% of all SNAs) have one or more volunteer Site Stewards who report observations and assist with management (total of 180 volunteers). 2-3. From January 1, 2023 until December 31, 2023, this appropriation was used to regularly update the SNA website with additions of new/edited content and to frequently update the events calendar. Four issues (Spring, Summer, Fall, and Winter 2023) of the Nature Notes e-newsletters was delivered to 14,000 subscribers. During this time, the SNA Facebook channel grew to over 11,300 followers. SNA contributed content to DNR's Instagram channel twice per month. A total of 46 events were implemented from January 1, 2023 to December 31, 2023 with nearly 1390 volunteer hours worked by over 330 volunteers, and over 2700 interpretive event attendees.

Activity 3

An 80-acre Quarry Park SNA addition has closed and was funded by the ML19, ML20 and ML21 ENRTF SNA

appropriations (41.9 acres was directly funded through this ML20 appropriation). Discussions around the acquisition of Rosedale Fen are still taking place with tribal leaders and DNR leadership so it is not moving forward at this time. The Cannon River Turtle SNA addition moved forward on the ML21 ENRTF SNA appropriation and recently closed. The addition to Grey Cloud Dunes has a signed Option with the landowner, and the project is proceeding through the ML19 appropriation.

Dissemination

From January 1, 2023 until December 31, 2023, 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 (Spring, Summer, Fall, and Winter 2023) of the Nature Notes e-newsletters were delivered to 14,000 subscribers. The SNA Facebook channel has grown to over 11,300 followers. During this time, the SNA Program also contributed SNA content twice monthly to the DNR Instagram channel.

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 and invitations, websites, newsletters, printed materials, presentations, and social media.

Status Update Reporting

Status Update October 1, 2023

Date Submitted: October 16, 2023

Date Approved: November 3, 2023

Overall Update

Woody and herbaceous invasive control has occurred on 324 acres at 25 SNAs. A mix of prescribed disturbance activities (prescribed fire, haying & mowing) have taken place on 708 acres at 14 SNAs. Site development projects have been carried out at 7 SNAs, including 2 SNA sites where new interpretive kiosks have been installed. Ecological and adaptive management monitoring have taken place at 24 SNAs with additional activities taking place over the summer of 2023. Four (4) SNAs have been selected for completion of site management plans or briefs and field data collection started taking place summer 2023.

The 2022 Natural Areas Conference, co-hosted by DNR's SNA Program, took place September 6-9th in Duluth. This conference brought in over 300 attendees from 32 states. SNA and MBS staff highlighted SNAs and the ENRTF during 7 sub-sessions and 4 field trips. Currently, 135 SNAs (~83% of all designated SNAs) have one or more volunteer Site Stewards who report observations and assist with management tasks (177 individual volunteers). Starting in January 2023 to present, SNA website, social media and newsletters have regularly provided new content and information. Several key parcels are moving forward for acquisition with this appropriation.

Activity 1

Cumulative to-date: 1-1. Adaptive management and ecological monitoring activities have taken place at 24 SNAs with additional activities taking place over the summer of 2023. 1-2. Four (4) SNAs have been selected for completion of site management plans or briefs and a contract has been awarded for 3 of them. The other will be done in-house by SNA staff. 1-3. One partner project, a 160-acre prescribed burn was completed on Bluestem Prairie SNA. 1-4. Four interpretive kiosk panels (to be installed at 2 SNAs) have been designed and purchased. 2 Interpretive kiosk panels were installed at 2 SNAs. Development work took place at 5 SNAs. 1-5. Prescribed fire (250 acres on 9 SNAs), prescribed haying (192 acres on 5 SNAs) and prescribed grazing (266 acres on 1 SNA) were completed for a total of 708 acres of prescribed disturbance. 1-6. Woody removal (115 acres on 10 SNAs) and invasive species treatment (209 acres on 18 SNAs) were completed for a total of 324 acres. 1-7. Additional seed was hand harvested and inter-seeded into a 17-acre area on Blanket Flower SNA that was restored through the ML18 appropriation.

Activity 2

Cumulative to-date: 2-1. The 2022 Natural Areas Conference, co-hosted by DNR's SNA Program, took place September 6-9th in Duluth. This conference brought in 300+ attendees from 32 states. SNA and MBS staff highlighted Minnesota SNAs and the ENRTF during 7 sub-sessions and 4 field trips. 2-2 through 2-4, transitioned to this appropriation January 1, 2023. 2-2. Currently, 135 SNAs (~83% of all SNAs) have one or more volunteer Site Stewards who report observations and assist with management (total of 177 volunteers). 2-3. From January 1, 2023 until present, this appropriation was used to regularly update the SNA website with additions of new/edited content and to frequently update the events calendar. Three issues (Spring, Summer, and Fall 2023) of the Nature Notes e-newsletters was delivered to 13,100 subscribers. During this time, the SNA Facebook channel grew to over 10,000 followers. SNA contributed content to DNR's Instagram channel twice per month. The SNA Flickr channel, used to encourage high quality photo sharing, has 118 members and over 1,600 photos. 2-4. Currently 35 events have been planned or implemented since January 1, 2023 with nearly 600 volunteer hours worked by over 150 volunteers, and over 700 interpretive event attendees.

Activity 3

Several SNA acquisition projects are in the works and depending on progress may be completed with this appropriation. An 80-acre Quarry Park SNA addition is likely going to be split between ML19, ML20 and ML21. The acquisition of

Rosedale Fen is still being negotiated but we are hoping to get to option this year. The Cannon River Turtle SNA addition has optioned and is going in front of the county soon for approval. The addition to Grey Cloud Dunes has a signed Option with the landowner, and the project is proceeding through the ML19 appropriation. This update includes a request to add an addition to King and Queen's Bluff SNA to the parcel list for possible acquisition. This inholding addition to the existing SNA has arguably one of the most diverse wildflower displays of a mesic hardwood forest in southern Minnesota. The forest type is a sugar maple-basswood-red oak forest on the north-facing bluff immediately on the Mississippi River. This update also includes a request to move additional money into acquisition. With so many great projects in the works, we are trying to fully utilize any money we think we can for acquisition while still meeting other outcomes.

Dissemination

From December 31, 2022 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 (Spring, Summer and Fall 2023) of the Nature Notes e-newsletters was delivered to 13,100 subscribers. The SNA Facebook channel has grown to over 10,000 followers. 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 118 members and over 1,600 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 and invitations, websites, newsletters, printed materials, presentations, and social media.

Status Update Reporting

Status Update April 1, 2023

Date Submitted: March 30, 2023

Date Approved: April 10, 2023

Overall Update

Woody and herbaceous invasives control has occurred on 120 acres at 8 SNAs. A mix of prescribed disturbance activities (prescribed fire, haying & mowing) have taken place on 375 acres at 5 SNAs. Site development projects have been carried out at 6 SNAs, including 1 SNA sites where new interpretive kiosks have been installed. Ecological and adaptive management monitoring have taken place at 24 SNAs with additional activities planned for summer of 2023. Four (4) SNAs have been selected for completion of site management plans or briefs and a request for proposals will be going out the end of March.

The 2022 Natural Areas Conference, co-hosted by DNR's SNA Program, took place September 6-9th in Duluth. This conference brought in over 300 attendees from 32 states. SNA and MBS staff highlighted SNAs and the ENRTF during 7 sub-sessions and 4 field trips. Currently, 133 SNAs (~83% of all designated SNAs) have one or more volunteer Site Stewards who report observations and assist with management tasks (169 individual volunteers). Starting in January 2023 to present, SNA website, social media and newsletters have regularly provided new content and information. Several parcels are moving forward for acquisition with this appropriation.

Activity 1

Cumulative to-date: 1-1. Adaptive management and ecological monitoring activities have taken place at 24 SNAs with additional activities planned for summer of 2023. 1-2. Four (4) SNAs have been selected for completion of site management plans or briefs and a request for proposals will be going out the end of March. 1-3. Partnership projects are currently being completed with previous appropriations and will switch to this appropriation in the next few months. 1-4. Four interpretive kiosk panels (to be installed at 2 SNAs) have been designed and purchased. 1 Interpretive kiosk panel was installed at 1 SNA. Development work took place at 5 SNAs. 1-5. Prescribed fire (31 acres on 2 SNAs) and prescribed haying (78 acres on 2 SNAs) and prescribed grazing (266 acres on 1 SNA) were completed for a total of 375 acres of prescribed disturbance. 1-6. Woody removal (82 acres on 4 SNAs) and invasive species treatment (38 acres on 4 SNAs) were completed for a total of 120 acres. 1-7. Staff Inter-seeding into 12 acres of the Blanket Flower SNA restoration that was completed through ML18 SNA appropriation to increase plant species diversity.

Activity 2

Cumulative to-date: 2-1. The 2022 Natural Areas Conference, co-hosted by DNR's SNA Program, took place September 6-9th in Duluth. This conference brought in 300+ attendees from 32 states. SNA and MBS staff highlighted Minnesota SNAs and the ENRTF during 7 sub-sessions and 4 field trips. 2-2 through 2-4, transitioned to this appropriation on January 1, 2023. 2-2. Currently, 133 SNAs (~83% of all designated SNAs) have one or more volunteer Site Stewards who report observations and assist with management tasks (total of 169 individual volunteers). 2-3. From January 1, 2023 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. One issue (Spring 2023) of the Nature Notes e-newsletters was delivered to 12,200 subscribers. During this time, the SNA Facebook channel grew to over 9,400 followers. SNA contributed content to Instagram, with posts twice per month to the DNR's agency-wide channel. The SNA Flickr channel, used to encourage high quality photo sharing, has 115 members and over 1,562 photos. 2-4. Interpretive and stewardship events are currently being planned for the upcoming months.

Activity 3

Rosedale Fen (Mahnommen County) is a site of outstanding biodiversity with the presence of high quality native plant communities and rare species. Of particular interest, a calcareous fen (state imperiled and globally rare), three state

threatened species, and two state special concern plant species can be found on site. The acquisition of Rosedale Fen is still being negotiated but has a number of complex issues to work through to determine the best scenario for protection. Once agreement is made about the right approach to conservation, the appraisal process will begin. The Cannon River Turtle SNA addition is currently in the appraisal stage, with an appraised valuation expected to be released this spring. The addition to Grey Cloud Dunes has a signed Option with the landowner, and the project is proceeding through local approvals.

Dissemination

From December 31, 2022 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. One issue (Spring 2023) of the Nature Notes e-newsletters was delivered to 12,200 subscribers. The SNA Facebook channel has grown to over 9,400 followers. 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 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 and invitations, websites, newsletters, printed materials, presentations, and social media.

Status Update Reporting

Status Update October 1, 2022

Date Submitted: September 28, 2022

Date Approved: October 11, 2022

Overall Update

Woody and herbaceous invasives control has occurred on 115 acres at 7 SNAs. A mix of prescribed disturbance activities (prescribed fire, haying & mowing) have taken place on 58 acres at 2 SNAs. Site development projects have been carried out at 8 SNAs, including 1 SNA sites where new interpretive kiosks have been installed. Ecological and adaptive management monitoring have taken place throughout the summer with outcomes to be reported in April of 2023.

The 2022 Natural Areas Conference, co-hosted by MN DNR's SNA Program, took place September 6-9th in Duluth. This conference brought in over 300 attendees from 32 states. SNA and Minnesota Biological Survey staff highlighted Minnesota Scientific and Natural Areas and the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund during 7 sub-sessions and 4 field trips.

Several parcels are being explored for acquisition with this appropriation. An amendment will be requested soon to add parcels once further internal vetting is completed.

Activity 1

Cumulative to-date: 1-1. Adaptive management and ecological monitoring activities took place throughout the summer of 2022. Outcomes will be reported during the April 2023 status update once staff have had a chance to summarize the field work completed and data captured. 1-2. Five SNAs have been identified as candidates for completion or update of site management plans on this appropriation. 1-3. Partnership projects are currently being completed with previous appropriations and will switch to this appropriation in the next few months. 1-4. Four interpretive kiosk panels (to be installed at 2 SNAs) have been designed and purchased. 1 Interpretive kiosk panel was installed at 1 SNA. Development work took place at 5 SNAs. 1-5. Prescribed fire (22 acres on 1 SNA) and prescribed haying (36 acres on 1 SNA) were completed for a total of 58 acres of prescribed disturbance. 1-6. Woody removal (77 acres on 3 SNAs) and invasive species treatment (38 acres on 4 SNAs) were completed for a total of 115 acres. 1-7. Planning for restoration projects to be completed with this appropriation is currently underway.

Activity 2

Cumulative to-date: 2-1. The 2022 Natural Areas Conference, co-hosted by MN DNR's SNA Program, took place September 6-9th in Duluth. This conference brought in over 300 attendees from 32 states. SNA and Minnesota Biological Survey staff highlighted Minnesota Scientific and Natural Areas and the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund during 7 sub-sessions and 4 field trips. 2-2, 2-3 & 2-4. Many of these efforts are continuations of past appropriations with work currently taking place on ML19 and work scheduled to start on this ML20 appropriation December 30, 2022.

Activity 3

Several parcels are being explored for acquisition with this appropriation. An amendment will be requested soon to add parcels once further internal vetting is completed.

Dissemination

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 and invitations, websites, newsletters, printed materials, presentations, and social media.

Status Update Reporting

Status Update April 1, 2022

Date Submitted: April 29, 2022

Date Approved: May 6, 2022

Overall Update

Habitat enhancement and site improvement activities are underway at 7 SNAs, with 45 acres of invasive species treatment, 15 miles of boundary maintenance, and 4 interpretive signs among the stewardship-related accomplishments to date. SNA staff are busy with planning and co-hosting duties for the upcoming Natural Areas Conference, which will highlight and bring nationwide practitioners to a handful of MN SNAs in the northeast part of the state this coming September 2022. Planning is well underway for the other outcomes on this appropriation, including SNA events, site management plans, as well as strategic acquisition of still-unprotected sites of statewide biodiversity significance.

Activity 1

To date, about 46 acres of woody invasives have been treated and site development work supported (repairing or replacing about 15 miles' worth of SNA boundary sign markers) at one SNA. This appropriation has also supported the design and purchase of 4 interpretive kiosk panels for upcoming installation at 2 SNA sites. Five SNAs have been identified as candidates for completion or update of site management plans on this appropriation. Planning is underway for the coming field season for other related Activity 1 outcomes.

Activity 2

Planning has been ramping up for the fall 2022 Natural Areas Conference co-hosted by MN DNR's SNA Program: several field trips, presentations, etc. are being planned that will visit and/or highlight MN SNAs in proximity of the conference destination of Duluth, MN. A new contract with Conservation Corps of Minnesota began in 2021 to assist with SNA social media and online communications, as well as events and site stewards. The site steward network is strong with 166 Stewards currently serving at 139 SNAs. The 45th (Spring 2022) issue of the Nature Notes e-newsletter was delivered to 10,519 subscribers, while the SNA Facebook page has over 8,800 followers at present (with the highest monthly reach in February 2022 at 51,753). Event planning on SNAs had until this week been limited to interpretive and community-science events, but planning for stewardship-focused volunteer events has now resumed.

Activity 3

Exploratory acquisition work is initiating on this appropriation. Project development and internal vetting is taking place, though no projects have approached the appraisal phase of acquisition yet on this funding.

Dissemination

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, while the SNA Facebook channel has achieved over 8,800 followers at present (with the highest monthly reach in February 2022 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.