

Final Abstract

Final Report Approved on October 28, 2024

M.L. 2021 Project Abstract

For the Period Ending June 30, 2024

Project Title: Precision Acquisition For Restoration, Groundwater Recharge, and Habitat

Project Manager: Courtney Phillips

Affiliation: Shell Rock River Watershed District

Mailing Address: 305 S 1st Ave

City/State/Zip: Albert Lea, MN 56007

Phone: (507) 379-8782

E-mail: courtney.phillips@co.freeborn.mn.us

Website: <https://www.shellrock.org/>

Funding Source:

Fiscal Year:

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

Appropriation Amount: \$467,000

Amount Spent: \$467,000

Amount Remaining: -

Sound bite of Project Outcomes and Results

The Shell Rock River Watershed District purchased a perpetual conservation easement on 42 acres of previous agricultural ground. Restoration efforts then included wetland establishment of roughly 20 acres for groundwater recharge and approximately 22 acres of natives were planted for pollinator habitat.

Overall Project Outcome and Results

Identified in the District's Comprehensive Water Management Plan, the need for water storage, wetland restoration, groundwater protection and suitable habitat for wildlife has been identified, with priority locations in the upper watersheds within the Shell Rock River watershed. The District has been working with a willing landowner to implement a conservation easement and wetland restoration on a parcel for the benefit of pollinators and groundwater recharge. The District has successfully entered into a permanent conservation easement of approximately 42 acres, paying out \$420,000. The District has also engineered and designed the wetland restoration project, placed the project out for public comment, and hired a contractor to implement the wetland restoration. The District followed all 103D processes for the project.

After completion, this project benefits not only local habitat who will utilize the native plants and wetland community, but offers areas of groundwater recharge that can have lasting impacts for future generations. By implementing the project, the District was able to achieve progress towards the Comprehensive Water Management Plans goals. This project has implemented 20 acres, out of plans 175 acres, identified for wetland restoration the Wedge Creek drainage area. This equates to approximately 148 acre-feet of storage. Additionally, it achieved 22 acres out of the plans goal of 384 acres in the Wedge Creek drainage area for perennial conservation cover. The Rusty Patch Bumblebee has been documented in close proximity to this project location and the pollinator planting will offer new habitat opportunities to improve pollinator success.

Project Results Use and Dissemination

Being this project included a conservation easement and wetland restoration, no studies or tools resulted. Project status updates were included on the Shell Rock River Watershed Districts Facebook page as well as numerous times being listed in our Watershed Weekly 8-2-2024 (shellrock.org) Project updates were also supplied at our Public Board Meetings. The District followed all noticing requirements that included logo use and applicable funding source.



Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund

M.L. 2021 Approved Final Report

General Information

Date: November 22, 2024

ID Number: 2021-154

Staff Lead: Michael Varien

Project Title: Precision Acquisition For Restoration, Groundwater Recharge, and Habitat

Project Budget: \$467,000

Project Manager Information

Name: Courtney Phillips

Organization: Shell Rock River Watershed District

Office Telephone: (507) 379-8782

Email: courtney.phillips@co.freeborn.mn.us

Web Address: <https://www.shellrock.org/>

Project Reporting

Final Report Approved: October 28, 2024

Reporting Status: Project Completed

Date of Last Action: October 28, 2024

Project Completion: June 30, 2024

Legal Information

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

Appropriation Language: \$467,000 the first year is from the trust fund to the commissioner of natural resources for an agreement with the Shell Rock River Watershed District to acquire and restore to wetland a key parcel of land to reduce downstream flooding while providing water storage, groundwater recharge, nutrient reduction, and pollinator and wildlife habitat.

Appropriation End Date: June 30, 2024

Narrative

Project Summary: This proposal is for a conservation easement and restoration of a 42-acre key parcel that will reduce flooding while providing water storage, groundwater recharge, nutrient reduction, pollinator and wildlife habitat.

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

The Shell Rock River Watershed District has been working with landowners to seek a solution to flooding and resulting loss of agricultural land due to increased rain events.

The District would like to work with a willing landowner, to enter into a conservation easement and restore 42-acres within the upstream reaches of a sub-watershed into a wetland to alleviate flooding and provide groundwater recharge.

The decline of wetlands in the upper regions of the watershed led to downstream locations being more prone to flooding. The easement and restoration of these wetlands and their habitat will decrease the risk of downstream flooding and increase water quality in the watershed.

The District began work on identifying a solution by completing an engineering study in 2017. This study took into consideration upstream and downstream issues in this sub-watershed. The study modeled the project drainage area, included precipitation and LIDAR data to develop contours. The study addressed these issues as well as scenarios for relieving the system. The scenarios developed were used as a guide for this application.

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.

The Shell Rock River Watershed District has a strong track record of working with willing landowners on flood control, water quality and habitat restoration projects. The SRRWD utilizes precision conservation modeling with monitoring to identify Property Management Zones (PMZs) on a sub-watershed basis.

Utilizing this information, the watershed district will acquire in easement, restore and manage a 42-acre property in the upper watershed. Through the easement of this key parcel, the watershed can then do the necessary restoration work to increase water storage. This will reduce the risk of downstream flooding, increase water quality in the watershed, and also provide for groundwater recharge.

The restoration work will focus on wetland restoration. This will result in reconnecting 25-acres of wetlands to the flood plain as part of the strategy to hold more water on the land. Restoration work will include plantings that will provide food and nesting habitat for wildlife and pollinators.

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 outcomes of this easement and restoration project would result in 42 acres of current agriculturally used ground be converted and restored into native wetlands and upland. This restoration will be providing water storage during rain events for nutrient reduction and groundwater recharge as well as be planted into habitat for pollinators and wildlife.

Specific outcomes to the water storage include over 25 acres of water storage that would reduce water flows by 52 cubic feet per second (cfs) during a 10-year storm event and 65 cfs during a 25 year storm event. This would help to alleviate flooding downstream.

Project Location

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

Watershed(s): Shell Rock River

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

Watershed(s): Shell Rock River

When will the work impact occur?

During the Project and In the Future

Activities and Milestones

Activity 1: Easement of the Property

Activity Budget: \$420,000

Activity Description:

This LCCMR application is seeking funding to put projects on the ground that directly benefit Minnesota's resources. The first task of this proposal is acquiring a conservation easement on the property for the restoration efforts.

For this easement, the District is working with a willing landowner that once funded, the project manager would work with the landowner to get an appraisal on the property to help determine an easement cost. The project manager would then coordinate all land easement processes that are required of the funding source.

Upon completion, the project manager will work with the landowner to finalize an easement amount and execute the easement. Specific outcomes include the Shell Rock holding an easement with a landowner of 40 acres for wetland restoration.

Activity Milestones:

Description	Approximate Completion Date
Complete Appraisal Process	January 31, 2023
Appraisal Review and Landowner Negotiations	February 28, 2023
DNR Approval	March 31, 2023
Sign Easement on the Property	October 31, 2023

Activity 2: Restoration of the Property

Activity Budget: \$47,000

Activity Description:

Upon property acquisition, the project manager will work to solicit an engineering firm to take the concept restoration plans into final project plans and bidding documents. Final plans will make sure to maximize the states funds into a project that has multiple conservation benefits including habitat, water protection value, and positive impacts on ground and surface water quality. This project will follow all applicable laws awarding the bidding and construction for the restoration project.

Once awarded, the project manager will work with the construction crew and engineer to implement the project per the plans specifications. Outcomes will include 25 acres of wetland creation that will have a permanent pool volume and/or saturated soils on the fringe areas. Also, surrounding the wetland area, approximately 20 acres of native seed establishment will buffer the wetland. This project will overall increase in the flood storage and habitat carrying capacity of the watershed.

Activity Milestones:

Description	Approximate Completion Date
Finalize Engineering/Design	April 30, 2023
Competitive Bidding of the Restoration Work	November 30, 2023
Construction of the Project Site	December 31, 2023
Final Construction Walk Through and Close Out	May 31, 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.

The District's project does not include studies or surveys but instead is a wetland restoration. Although there may not be new findings, information about the project including current status, engineering reports and construction information will be available on our website at shellrock.org and will be updated on our Facebook page with the trust fund logo being displayed on all dissemination productions. Following the ENRTF acknowledgement guidelines, signage with the trust fund logo will be placed at the site of the acquisition and wetland restoration for the public to see.

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?

The proposal includes funding activities to both acquire in easement and restore the property. Most of the work will be completed entirely by the funding request and during the timeline of the grant.

The SRRWD is a governmental body that has a local option sales tax in place. If touch-up restoration needs to take place, the SRRWD could use sales tax, or general fund dollars to complete the work.

Other ENRTF Appropriations Awarded in the Last Six Years

Name	Appropriation	Amount Awarded
Implement a Pilot Credit-Trading System for Storm Water in Shell Rock River Watershed to Improve Water Quality	M.L. 2018, Chp. 214, Art. 4, Sec. 2, Subd. 04k	\$300,000

Budget Summary

Category / Name	Subcategory or Type	Description	Purpose	Gen. Ineligible	% Benefits	# FTE	Classified Staff?	\$ Amount	\$ Amount Spent	\$ Amount Remaining
Personnel										
Carmen Christensen		Financial Technician			20%	0.15		\$1,000	-	-
Courtney Phillips		Project Manager			20%	0.45		\$9,468	-	-
							Sub Total	\$10,468	\$10,468	-
Contracts and Services										
TBD	Acquisition costs	For the easement of the project, professional services will be required to draft the easement, and to complete a survey and appraisal of the property.				0.05		\$4,471	\$4,471	-
TBD	Professional or Technical Service Contract	An engineering firm will need to be selected for the completion of the project plans.				0.1		\$14,907	\$14,907	-
TBD	Professional or Technical Service Contract	Construction company to complete the wetland restoration work and purchase seed.				0.5		\$17,154	\$17,154	-
							Sub Total	\$36,532	\$36,532	-
Equipment, Tools, and Supplies										
							Sub Total	-	-	-
Capital Expenditures										
							Sub Total	-	-	-
Acquisitions and Stewardship										

	Conservation Easement Acquisition	Acres: 42 Parcels: 1						\$420,000	\$420,000	-
							Sub Total	\$420,000	\$420,000	-
Travel In Minnesota										
							Sub Total	-	-	-
Travel Outside Minnesota										
							Sub Total	-	-	-
Printing and Publication										
							Sub Total	-	-	-
Other Expenses										
							Sub Total	-	-	-
							Grand Total	\$467,000	\$467,000	-

Classified Staff or Generally Ineligible Expenses

Category/Name	Subcategory or Type	Description	Justification Ineligible Expense or Classified Staff Request
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Non ENRTF Funds

Category	Specific Source	Use	Status	\$ Amount	\$ Amount Spent	\$ Amount Remaining
State						
			State Sub Total	-	-	-
Non-State						
In-Kind	Local Option Sales Tax or General Fund Dollars	Used for preliminary engineering study.	Secured	\$10,483	-	\$10,483
			Non State Sub Total	\$10,483	-	\$10,483
			Funds Total	\$10,483	-	\$10,483

Acquisition and Restoration

Parcel List

Name	County	Site Significance	Activity	Acres	Miles	Estimated Cost	Type of Landowner	Easement or Title Holder	Status of Work
Bryson Site	Freeborn	Very suitable site for wetland restoration and groundwater recharge	Conservation Easement	42	0.2	\$420,000	Private	Shell Rock River Watershed District	Purchased
Totals				42	0.2	\$420,000			

Conservation Easement 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.

The SRRWD utilizes precision conservation modeling with monitoring to identify Property Management Zones (PMZs) on a sub-watershed basis. The PMZs was a watershed wide parcel review where habitat areas were ranked on a 1 to 3 scale. This scale incorporated a variety of measures including size of the habitat complex to be protected, proximity to existing protection, location to MN County Biological Survey (MCBS) areas and distance to a water source. This parcel is located on the ranking scale and is listed as a 2, with a high priority to be restored.

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.

Wetland restorations, like this one, are located in numerous locations in the Shell Rocks Comprehensive Water Management Plan. Starting with the implementation table on page 102. Link:

https://www.shellrock.org/vertical/sites/%7B9804AD9D-40CA-46B1-8F91-CC0257E7304A%7D/uploads/2022-02-02_shellRockWinnebagoRiver1W1P_MN_ISG.pdf

3. For any conservation easement acquired, 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.

Similar to LSOHC requirements, we have ecological and restoration plan forms. We will follow that same framework and form that includes information such as restoration statutes to follow, a project implementation table, a long-term management table, and questions requiring considerations proper conservation restorations. This will be included in the project binder and saved under the project folder. Long term maintenance of our parcels is funded by a local-option sales tax.

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.

N/A

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 noted in M.S. 116P.17, the SRRWD will seek and provide confirmation from the DNR Commissioner is obtained prior to final transaction.

6. Provide a statement addressing how conservation easements will address specific water quality protection activities, such as keeping water on the landscape, reducing nutrient and contaminant loading, protecting groundwater, and not permitting artificial hydrological modifications.

This conservation easement will address holding water on the landscape, providing groundwater recharge, planting of native prairie and flower species as well as reducing nutrients from entering public waters.

7. Describe the long-term monitoring and enforcement program for conservation easements acquired on parcels by your organization, including explanations of the process used for calculating conservation easement monitoring and enforcement costs, the process used for annual inspection and reporting on monitoring and enforcement activities, and the process used to ensure perpetual funding and implementation of monitoring and enforcement activities.

The SRRWD is a local government unit that has local taxing authority and a local option sales tax in place to fund monitoring and maintain properties. The district has an operation and maintenance cost form for each project that is kept on file that lists maintenance costs, timelines, and sources. The district has multiple properties that are inspected annually for maintenance and implements the work if needed. This conservation easement can be easily incorporated into that framework once restoration is complete.

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.

This statement provides a confirmation that all restoration activities will be completed on land that is permanently protected by easement under public ownership by the local government unit: Shell Rock River Watershed District, or their successor.

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.

The SRRWD develops a restoration and management plan that is consistent with current conservation science and restoration goals for the site. Restoration consideration takes into account the soils, topography, hydrology and other factors that give the site the best long-term success. Other implantation actions included in the plan include native habitat species planting, long term maintenance and funding of that maintenance. For each restoration project, a project binder is created that includes all plans and details associated with the project and is housed in the project managers office via hard and electronic copy. Projects are visited yearly to determine that they are performing to the intended use.

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.

During the planning development, the project manager will work with the engineers to include the Board of Water and Soil Resources "Native Vegetation Establishment and Enhancement Guidelines" into the project plans and bidding documents. This will ensure that engineers are aware of the principles and that the awarded contractors will incorporate the guidelines into the restoration project.

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.

The SRRWD is a local government body that has a local options sales tax in place to provide maintenance to properties after the original funding source is complete. All restoration projects are checked yearly to determine if actions are needed.

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

Similar to LSOHC procedures that the District is familiar with, after receiving the funding, the District will make a timely written contact with the Conservation Corps of Minnesota for possible use of the corps' services to contract for restoration and enhancement services.

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.

This statement indicates that the SRRWD will complete evaluations on parcels where activities as a result of a LCCMR funding appropriation. Evaluations both initially and in 3-year consecutive follow-ups will result and follow applicable producers stated above.

Attachments

Required Attachments

Map

File: [9911dde2-040.pdf](#)

Alternate Text for Map

The attached map shows the approximate location of the easement along with the wetland restoration locations within that parcel....

Board Resolution or Letter

Title	File
SRRWD Board Resolution	89adef4-066.pdf

Supplemental Attachments

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

Title	File
2018 Audit	59e400ba-06c.pdf
Background Check Form	4ac3f7f2-d14.pdf
LCCMR Logo Sign Installed	13898b82-c55.jpe

Difference between Proposal and Work Plan

Describe changes from Proposal to Work Plan Stage

Being that the project was not fully funded; the budget had to be reduced by \$82,000. This is a two part project with land acquisition and wetland restoration funds. Acquisition costs stayed the same but the wetland restoration budget for professional and technical contracts was reduced by \$75,000. Staff wages were also reduced by \$7,000. Project scope and outcomes should remain near the same for water storage goals.

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?

N/A

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	Amendment Request	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project Collaborators - Project Manager Info • General Information • Narrative • Attachments • Acquisition and Restoration - Conservation Easement Acquisition • Acquisition and Restoration - Easement Acquisition (Other) • Acquisition and Restoration - Restoration • Activities and Milestones • Budget - Professional / Technical Contracts • Budget - Acquisition • Acquisition and Restoration - Parcel List 	The SRRWD was working with a landowner who wanted a wetland restoration completed on his property. After discussing the options with an engineering firm, the landowner has decided to use the wetland banking option rather than our LCCMR funding. The District, working with multiple landowners a year, has another project of even greater scope, to complete the wetland restoration project as presented.	January 13, 2023	Yes	January 20, 2023
2	Amendment Request	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget • Narrative • Activities and Milestones • Budget - Personnel • Budget - Professional / Technical Contracts • Budget - Acquisition • Acquisition and Restoration - Parcel List 	Amendment is moving additional funds into easement acquisition per Monica Weber for reimbursement. Prices have increased significantly in recent years and this price is reflective of the appraisal we received, plus the acres were increased. Landowner is ready to sign easement once this amendment is approved. Wetland restoration scope of work will stay the same and will be completed with remaining, in addition to, other District funds.	October 19, 2023	Yes	November 6, 2023
3	Amendment Request	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget - Personnel • Budget - Professional / Technical Contracts 	This amendment is to reconcile our budget to align with funds spent. Once amendment is approved, the District will be submitting a final status report and closing out the grant.	April 15, 2024	Yes	May 17, 2024

Status Update Reporting

Final Status Update August 14, 2024

Date Submitted: September 9, 2024

Date Approved: October 15, 2024

Overall Update

The District has been working with a willing landowner to implement a conservation easement and wetland restoration on a parcel for the benefit of pollinators and groundwater recharge. From the last status update, the District has successfully entered into a permanent conservation easement of 42 acres, paying out \$420,000. The District has also engineered and designed the wetland restoration project, purchased the seed, and established the project through 103D. Restoration efforts then included wetland establishment of roughly 20 acres for groundwater recharge and approximately 22 acres of natives were planted for pollinator habitat. From the last update, an amendment was made to reconcile the budget slightly to match spent funds. The District has fully completed and expended all LCCMR funds.

Activity 1

Activity 1 included funding to implement a permanent conservation easement of approximately 42 acres for wetland restoration, groundwater recharge and habitat. After completing the required survey, appraisal and review process, the District secured the easement in February of 2024. This is now a completed activity.

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

Activity 2

Activity 2 included restoration of the site. The engineering for restoration was completed parallel to the easement, activity 1, process. The District has engineered and seeded the site. Additional restoration of the site, including wetland scrapes, will be funded with different District funding. Activity two is now fully complete.

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

Dissemination

The District is following dissemination as planned. Anytime the project is referenced, the logo is used and the applicable funding source is listed.

Status Update Reporting

Status Update June 1, 2024

Date Submitted: September 9, 2024

Date Approved: October 15, 2024

Overall Update

The District has been working with a willing landowner to implement a conservation easement and wetland restoration on a parcel for the benefit of pollinators and groundwater recharge. From the last status update, the District has successfully entered into a permanent conservation easement of 41 acres, paying out \$420,000. The District has also engineered and designed the wetland restoration project, purchased the seed, and established the project through 103D. From the last update, an amendment was made to reconcile the budget slightly to match spent funds. The District has fully completed, and expended all LCCMR funds and will be soon closing out the grant.

Activity 1

Activity 1 included funding to implement a permanent conservation easement of approximately 40 acres for wetland restoration, groundwater recharge and habitat. After completing the required survey, appraisal and review process, the District secured the easement in February of 2024. This is now a completed activity.

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

Activity 2

Activity 2 included restoration of the site. The engineering for restoration was completed parallel to the easement, activity 1, process. The District has engineered and seeded the site. Additional restoration of the site, including wetland scrapes, will be funded with different District funding. Activity two is now fully complete.

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

Dissemination

The District is following dissemination as planned. Anytime the project is referenced, the logo is used and the applicable funding source is listed.

Status Update Reporting

Status Update December 1, 2023

Date Submitted: October 19, 2023

Date Approved: November 6, 2023

Overall Update

The District is looking to submit an amendment to make the workplan budget match the easement value, as a result, the status update is also due. The District has been working with a willing landowner to implement a conservation easement and wetland restoration on a parcel for the benefit of pollinators and groundwater recharge. The District completed a survey and appraisal over the summer while also completing engineering of the site for wetland restoration. The District looks to sign the easement after receiving appropriate approval. The Project is ready to be placed out for quote once the easement is signed.

Activity 1

Over the summer the District had the easement area surveyed off and the parcel was appraised. Attorneys also drafted the conservation easement and the easement was sent to the landowners for approval. The District is planning to amend the workplan to match the easement value and get reimbursed for the easement for signing. Once signed, the restoration work will be placed out for quote.

Activity 2

Engineering and designing the wetland was done parallel to the survey and appraisal of the conservation easement. The SRRWD Board approved project plans, held a public hearing, and established the project by resolution at their September and October board meetings. Project plans have been reviewed following Statutes 103D are ready to be placed out for quote once the easement is signed. The District is looking to award a contractor at the December Board Meeting. Construction can start once awarded.

Dissemination

The District is following dissemination as planned. Anytime the project is referenced, the logo is used and the applicable funding source is listed.

Status Update Reporting

Status Update June 1, 2023

Date Submitted: June 8, 2023

Date Approved: June 9, 2023

Overall Update

After the amendment was approved, the District began working with the new landowner to implement the wetland restoration. This wetland restoration consists of acquiring an easement on a portion of the property and then implementing a wetland restoration. Currently, we are in the process of securing the easement and started discussions with the awarded engineering firm on wetland restoration/design. Initial permitting discussions are also running parallel to the easement process. The District has also started to implement monthly check in meetings with legal council to make sure this project is moving forward in the correct process.

Activity 1

Being this easement is only part of a parcel, the landowner and the District worked together to determine where the easement will cover based on landowner agreement and wetland contours. After a few revisions, the District and landowner agreed on an area and the site is currently getting surveyed. The District has an appraiser, following ENTRF requirements, lined up to complete an appraisal of the property to determine an easement value once the survey is complete. At the same time, the District has our legal counsel drafting an easement and reviewing the DNR commissioner approval process. Although running slightly behind schedule, the District is confident that the project will be completed on time.

Activity 2

The District has been working with an engineering firm on the wetland restoration component of this project, parallel to the easement process. The awarded engineering firm is local, and familiar with the area and already has a scope of work in mind. Once the easement is approved and signed, the engineering firm will submit final plans to the SRRWD board for approval. The District is looking at construction in late fall of 2023 with touch up work, if needed taking place spring of 2024. This gives the District flexibility to implement construction in the spring 2024 season if needed.

Dissemination

The District is following dissemination as planned. Anytime the project is referenced, the logo is used and the applicable funding source is listed.

Status Update Reporting

Status Update December 1, 2022

Date Submitted: January 13, 2023

Date Approved: January 20, 2023

Overall Update

The Watershed District was working with a landowner who wanted a wetland restoration completed on his property. What we didn't know was that the landowner was also looking at the wetland banking option as another alternative to completing their wetland restoration. After discussing the options with an engineering firm, the landowner has decided to use the wetland banking option rather than our LCCMR funding. The District, working with multiple landowners a year, has another project of similar scope, that can be completed with this funding. This amended location is near the proposal property and will actually be larger in restored wetland acres. An amendment request will be forthcoming by the District.

Activity 1

Activity One included purchasing the wetland restoration property. After asking the landowner repeatedly, they finally told us that they are going to keep the property and complete the wetland restoration themselves and then get paid for wetland banking credits. An amendment with the new property will be coming.

Activity 2

Activity two is wetland restoration. Once we have an amended property, we will work on the wetland restoration. The District is confident that work can still be done within the grant timeline.

Dissemination

The District is following the dissemination as planned. Anytime the project is referenced, the logo is used and the applicable funding source for the project is listed.

Status Update Reporting

Status Update June 1, 2022

Date Submitted: July 11, 2022

Date Approved: July 13, 2022

Overall Update

The SRRWD, with this funding, will purchase and restore a wetland restoration property for habitat and groundwater recharge. The SRRWD is currently working on Activity 1 of the Project. Project is still on track to be completed by grant deadline.

Activity 1

Activity 1 includes purchasing the property for the restoration. Currently the District is following the processes imposed by the grant agreement and is working towards landowner negotiations. While the District was working to secure funding for this project, the landowner was looking at other options for wetland restoration as well. Another option they looked at was doing a wetland banking project to generate credits. Currently the landowner just wants to look at those option before committing to selling. The District expects to be entering into an option agreement within the next 4 months.

Activity 2

Activity 2 cannot begin until activity one is complete.

Dissemination

The District is following the dissemination as planned. Anytime the project is referenced, the logo is used and the applicable funding source for the project is listed.