

Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources

2005 Project Abstract

For the Period Ending June 30, 2008

PROJECT TITLE: Metropolitan Area Wildlife Corridors – Phase II: Friends of the Mississippi River 2.3

Project Manager: Tom Lewanski.

Affiliation: Friends of the Mississippi River

Mailing Address: 360 North Robert Street, Suite 400

City / State / Zip : Saint Paul, Minnesota 55101

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Legal Citation: ML 2005, 1st Spec. Sess., [Chap.1], Art. 2, Sec.[11], Subd.5(b).

Appropriation Amount: \$90,000

Overall Project Outcome and Results

Friends of the Mississippi River (FMR) had one result in this project: To restore and enhance significant habitat.

Objective: In our proposal and final work program, FMR committed to restore and/or enhance 45 acres of significant habitat using MWC II funding and an additional 12 acres of significant habitat using other funding for a total of 57 acres, which may include prairie, oak savanna, and deciduous forest and/or wetland communities.

Results: At the conclusion of the Phase II (2005 appropriation), FMR has restored or enhanced 137-acres of significant habitat using funds provided by the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund (ENRTF). Furthermore, The ENRTF funding allowed FMR to leverage \$82,950 in other state and non state funding that resulted in an additional 89 acres being restored or enhanced, for a total of over 226-acres restored or enhanced during Phase II (2005 appropriation) of the MeCC.

Techniques that were employed to restore and enhance these areas included: soil preparation (spraying, burning, disking, dragging), seed drilling, mowing, prescribed burning, spot spraying, installation of native plants, and removal of invasive plant species.

During Phase II, FMR focused its restoration and enhancement activities at the following natural areas:

- Hastings River Flats Park
- Sand Coulee Prairie (City owned property and SNA property)
- Pine Bend Bluffs Natural Area (SNA property)
- Rosemount Wildlife Preserve (City owned property)
- Karpen Site (Private, permanently protected site, easement pending)
- Spring Lake Park Reserve
- Empire Wastewater Treatment plant

These sites are all located within a Metro Conservation Corridor. The majority of them are also located within locally developed greenway corridors. As such these sites contribute to both local and state efforts to develop landscape connectivity and improve wildlife habitat. Four of the sites (Sand Coulee, Pine Bend Bluffs, Rosemount Wildlife Preserve, and Karpen) also have associated protection efforts going as well.

Project Results Use and Dissemination

FMR has disseminated information about this project in a number of ways.

1. We have worked with reporters on newspaper stories about our specific projects.
2. We have published stories in our newsletters about our specific projects.
3. When we organize volunteer restoration events, we discuss our partners including MeCC and LCCMR.

LCMR 2005 Work Program Final Report

Date of Report: June 30, 2008.

LCCMR 2005 Work Program Final Report

I. PROJECT TITLE: Metropolitan Area Wildlife Corridors – Phase II: Friends of the Mississippi River 2.3

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Location: Within mapped Focus Areas and within the counties of Anoka, Dakota, Goodhue, Hennepin, Ramsey, and Washington. See Figure 1.

Total Biennial LCMR Project Budget:	LCMR Appropriation:	\$ 90,000
	Minus Amount Spent:	\$ 89,685.41
	Equal Balance:	\$ 314.59

Legal Citation: ML 2005, 1st Spec. Sess., [Chap.1], Art. 2, Sec.[11], Subd.5(b).

Appropriation Language: Metropolitan Area Wildlife Corridors – Phase II. \$1,765,000 the first year and \$1,765,000 the second year are from the trust fund to the commissioner of natural resources for the second biennium for acceleration of agency programs and cooperative agreements with the Trust for Public Land, Ducks Unlimited, Inc., Friends of the Mississippi River, Great River Greening, Minnesota Land Trust, Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge Trust, Inc., Pheasants Forever, Inc. and Friends of the Minnesota Valley for the purposes of planning, improving, and protecting important natural areas in the metropolitan region, as defined by Minnesota Statutes, section 473.121, subdivision 2 and portions of the surrounding counties, through grants, contracted services, conservation easements, and fee acquisition. Land acquired with this appropriation must be sufficiently improved to meet at least minimum management standards as determined by the commissioner of natural resources. Expenditures are limited to the identified project areas as defined in the work program. This appropriation may not be used for the purchase of residential structures, unless expressly approved in the work program. Any land acquired in fee title by the commissioner of natural resources with money from this appropriation must be designated: (1) as an outdoor recreation unit under

Minnesota Statutes, section 86A.07; or (2) as provided in Minnesota Statutes, sections 89.018, subdivision 2, paragraph (a); 97A.101; 97A.125; 97C.001; and 97C.011. The commissioner may similarly designate any lands acquired in less than fee title. This appropriation is available until June 30, 2008, at which time the project must be completed and final products delivered, unless an earlier date is specified in the work program.

II. and III. Final Project Summary

Friends of the Mississippi River (FMR) had one result in this project: To restore and enhance significant habitat.

Objective: In our proposal and final work program, FMR committed to restore and/or enhance 45 acres of significant habitat using MWC II funding and an additional 12 acres of significant habitat using other funding for a total of 57 acres, which may include prairie, oak savanna, and deciduous forest and/or wetland communities.

Results: At the conclusion of the Phase II (2005 appropriation), FMR has restored or enhanced 137-acres of significant habitat using funds provided by the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund (ENRTF). Furthermore, The ENRTF funding allowed FMR to leverage \$82,950 in other state and non state funding that resulted in an additional 89 acres being restored or enhanced, for a total of over 226-acres restored or enhanced during Phase II (2005 appropriation) of the MeCC.

Techniques that were employed to restore and enhance these areas included: soil preparation (spraying, burning, disking, dragging), seed drilling, mowing, prescribed burning, spot spraying, installation of native plants, and removal of invasive plant species.

During Phase II, FMR focused its restoration and enhancement activities at the following natural areas:

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- Empire Wastewater Treatment plant

These sites are all located within a Metro Conservation Corridor. The majority of them are also located within locally developed greenway corridors. As such these sites contribute to both local and state efforts to develop landscape connectivity and improve wildlife habitat. Four of the sites (Sand Coulee, Pine Bend Bluffs,

Rosemount Wildlife Preserve, and Karpen) also have associated protection efforts going as well.

IV. OUTLINE OF PROJECT RESULTS:

Result 1: Restore and/or enhance 45 acres of significant habitat.

The information below provides details on the restoration and enhancement projects and activities that FMR conducted during the time frame of this grant with Trust Fund and other funding. It should be noted that the Metro Conservation Corridors restoration activities and the investment of Trust Funds have resulted in greater impacts than the MeCC could have accomplished alone. MeCC projects have served as a catalyst for additional restoration activities in the vicinity of the projects funded by the Trust Fund.

Hastings Riverflats. On June 8 2006, a volunteer wetland planting event was held. Volunteers installed numerous wetland plants (vegetated mats) along the shore of the lake and many tree seedlings were removed from a prairie planting.

The 32-acre prairie restoration at the park was in its fourth growing season in 2007. The 2007 growing season reflected a positive response to the burn that was completed in fall 2006, with vigorous growth of the native prairie species and much reduced cover of weedy and invasive species. On-going management in spring 2007 consisted of herbicide control of exotic species such as purple loosestrife, reed canary grass, clovers, and thistle.

Weed control was conducted over a 4-acre area at the Hastings Riverflats park, where previous prairie restoration took place.

Total allocated acreage: MeCC – 5 acres, other funding – 8 acres.

Rosemount Wildlife Preserve. A contractor was hired in late winter 2006, to remove buckthorn. This work included herbicide treatment of the stumps (MeCC funding - 2 acres).

During the spring of 2006, a contractor was hired to overspray a planted prairie at the same site. This installed prairie was suffering from an overabundance of red clover, which threatened the viability of the prairie. The applied herbicide greatly reduced the clover cover. A prescribed burn was also conducted at the site.

Prairie and woodland restoration continued in 2007. A planting event was held on April 28, 2007 to install 216 trees and shrubs. About 35 volunteers installed the plants, plus mulch and fencing, and watered them. MeCC funds were used to purchase all the plant material, mulch and fencing.

In 2007, a prescribed burn was completed on approximately 16 acres of woodland within the Preserve.

Total allocated acreage: MeCC – 8 acres, other funding – 27.5 acres.

Sand Coulee near Hastings. A contractor was hired to remove invasive exotic woody plant material from an 8-acre woodland that is adjacent to an existing high quality prairie. (MeCC funding – 8 acres. Other state funding: 3 acres)

A prescribed burn was completed on a 25-acre portion of the sand coulee in Hastings where FMR has been conducting on-going management and maintenance of the high quality dry prairie. Wetland plants were also purchased for installation at a stormwater pond in the coulee. The plants were installed by a group of volunteers during the spring of 2007 (MeCC funding – 25 acres).

During the fall of 2007, buckthorn removal took place over a 30-acre area of prairie and associated woodlands (1.5 acres with MeCC funding and 28.47 acres with non-state matching funds).

During the winter of 2008, FMR hired a contractor to remove cedar and elm as well as buckthorn and honeysuckle from a 2-acre portion of the prairie that the City of Hastings owns in the Sand Coulee. During this timeframe FMR also cut and treated buckthorn and cut red cedars from 3-acres on the SNA portion of the prairie (MeCC funding – 5 acres).

Total allocated acreage: MeCC – 34.5 acres, other funding – 31.5 acres.

Pine Bend Bluffs. A contractor was hired to over-spray herbicide on 8-acres to address resprouting buckthorn that had been previously removed. A 2-acre prairie restoration was in its second growing season in 2007. Project tasks during 2007 consisted of mowing as part of the standard procedure for second year prairie establishment. An additional 15-ac area was also prepared for planting in the fall. This preparation included removing brush and old stumps.

The 15-acre site, within the SNA was seeded in the fall of 2007. Follow up weed control was also done.

FMR hired a contractor to remove woody exotic plants from a 6-acre section of the Pine Bend Bluffs SNA. During the winter of 2008, FMR cut and treated buckthorn and honeysuckle from bluff prairies. Burned piles of buckthorn and honeysuckle removed from prairie.

Total allocated acreage: MeCC – 17 acres, other funding – 12 acres.

Spring Lake Park Reserve. A contractor was hired to remove invasive exotic woody plants from a 60-acre woodland. This woodland is relatively high quality. Exotic invasive plants were sporadic throughout the woodland. We wanted to remove these plants before the problem became a much larger one.

Total allocated acreage: MeCC – 30 acres, other funding – 30 acres.

Empire Wastewater Treatment plant: Seeding and follow up management activities on 3 acres of wetland. Prairie was enhanced by adding forbs to 3 acres. (MeCC funding - <1 acre, other funding – 6 acres).

Karpen Property: In 2007, a volunteer event was held to install 50 bareroot shrubs at this site overlooking the Mississippi River in Hastings. MeCC funds were used to purchase 17 of the shrubs. Buckthorn seedlings were sprayed with herbicide over a 5-acre area and woody plants were removed (5 acres with MeCC funding).

Total allocated acreage: MeCC – 5 acres, other funding – .5 acres.

- Significance of these results. We at FMR feel that we made real, substantial, and meaningful progress at restoring and enhancing the habitat values at each of these locations. A part of the significance of this work, in addition to the improved habitat value, was that these efforts enabled us to raise the level of awareness of these natural areas in the local communities and the LCCMR.
- Final results. At the conclusion of the Phase II (2005 appropriation), FMR has restored or enhanced 100-acres of significant habitat using funds provided by the LCCMR. Furthermore, The Metro Conservation Corridor funding allowed FMR to leverage \$82,950 in other state and non state funding that resulted in an additional 112.5 acres being restored or enhanced, for a total of 212.5-acres restored or enhanced during Phase II (2005 appropriation) of the MeCC.

Summary Budget Information for Result 1:	LCMR Budget	<u>\$90,000.00</u>
	Balance	<u>\$314.59</u>
	Leveraged funds	<u>\$82,950</u>

Completion Date:

- We anticipate that by January 31, 2006 15 acres of significant habitat will be restored and/or enhanced.
- We anticipate that by January 31, 2007 an additional 15 acres of significant habitat will be restored and/or enhanced.
- We anticipate that by June 30, 2008 an additional 15 acres of significant habitat will be restored and/or enhanced, bringing the total acres restored and/or enhanced at the end of the grant period to 45.

V. TOTAL LCMR PROJECT BUDGET:

All Results: Personnel: \$18,276.07
All Results: Equipment: \$ 0
All Results: Development: \$71,223.93
All Results: Acquisition: \$0
All Results: Other: \$(In state travel - \$500.

TOTAL LCMR PROJECT BUDGET: \$90,000

Explanation of Capital Expenditures Greater Than \$3,500:

VI. OTHER FUNDS & PARTNERS:

A. Project Partners: DNR-SNA Program, the City of Hastings, the City of Rosemount, Dakota County Parks, Dakota County Farmland and Natural Area Program, Metropolitan Council

B. Other Funds being Spent during the Project Period: Friends of the Mississippi River - \$30,000; Metropolitan Council-MetroEnvironmental Partnership grant - \$10,038; Dakota County - \$6,830; St. Paul Audubon - \$5,000; City of Hastings/Metro Greenways grant - \$20,000; Minnesota DNR Remediation grant - \$2,000; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Private Stewardship grant - \$9,082.

C. Required Match (if applicable): NA

D. Past Spending: FMR received \$92,000 in Metropolitan Wildlife Corridors Phase I (July 2003 – June, 2006)

E. Time: 3 years, until June 30, 2008.

VII. DISSEMINATION: Metro Corridors will periodically distribute information about the program through the widely broadcasted emails to people on the Regional Greenways Collaborative (RGC) database, through the RGC quarterly meetings, and jointly held county meetings. As projects are completed, FMR will work with local newspapers to get stories published, will include articles in its newsletter, and will publicize them on its website.

The following are examples of published articles about FMR projects that included references to the LCCMR.

- Rosemount Town Pages. October 27, 2006. *65 volunteers participate in savannah restoration work on Flint Hills' property.*
- This Week Newspaper (online edition). 1/13/06. Restoration begins on area woodlands.
- Friends of the Mississippi River newsletter. Spring, 2008. Natural Infrastructure: Connecting the Pieces for a Healthy Habitat.
- Friends of the Mississippi River newsletter. Fall, 2007. FMR Leads Effort to Protect a Portion of the Sand Coulee.

VIII. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS: Periodic work program progress reports will be submitted not later than February 1st and August 1st each year, starting with February 1st, 2006. A final work program report will be submitted by July 1st, 2008.

IX. RESEARCH PROJECTS: NA

Attachment A: Budget Detail -- Directions

Guidelines:

1. The Attachment A should be consistent with the revised Fall 2004 proposal at the new dollar amount.
2. Provide specific information for the following budget categories:
 - Personnel**
 - Equipment**
 - Development**
 - Acquisition**
 - Other**
3. The Commission will not allow office space rental fees or salary payments to officers or directors, this applies to ALL PROPOSALS. See the 2005 Request for Proposal p.10 for Eligible and Ineligible Costs.
4. Be as specific as possible and use as many lines as needed. If the template does not include a category that you need, add it. Similarly, delete budget items that you do not need.
5. Many proposals listed Contracts in the budget information. For Attachment A more specifics are needed: Contracts with whom? To do what? Include Personnel, Equipment, etc. under the contract. If this information is not available, you will need to issue a broadly competitive RFP and say so in Attachment A. You will need to use the standard LCMR agreement format for all subcontracts including project partners who will receive LCMR money, but do not have an LCMR work program. The current agreement form is on the LCMR web site.
6. The only allowable legal fees are for land acquisition and clearing title to land. ~~List these costs under the personnel or contracts budget items.~~ List these costs under the acquisition category – don't split in budget, but list land & transaction costs separately in expenditure reporting.
7. Travel expenses whether in Minnesota or out of the state are subject to the limits in the Commissioners Plan, Chapter 15 at: <http://www.doer.state.mn.us/lab-rel/pdfs/0305/Commissioners%20Plan%202003-5.pdf>. Out of state travel must be explicitly approved in the LCMR work program.
8. Fringe benefits should state the rate applied ~~and estimated dollar amount for health insurance and employer retirement contribution.~~

Attachment A: Budget Detail for 2005 Metro Corridors Project					date: 6/30/08	
Project Title: Proposal Title: Metropolitan Area Wildlife Corridors - Phase II: Friends of the Mississippi River 2.3						
Project Manager Name: Tom Lewanski						
LCMR Requested Dollars: \$ 90,000						
BUDGET ITEM	Result 1: Restoration				Comments	
	Amount Budgeted (\$)	Revised Budget as of April 25, 08*	Amount Spent as of: June 30, 2008 (\$)	Balance (\$)		
PERSONNEL						
Staff expenses, wages, salaries, & benefits	21,280.00	18,276.07	18,025.31	250.76	Conservation Director (landowner liaison, project selection & development, overall project management. .09 annual equivalent FTE) Restoration Ecologist (Specific restoration project selection, design, implementation management. .26 annual equivalent FTE.) Accountant (project accounting, preparation of LCMR invoices. .01 annual equivalent FTE). Benefits are	
DEVELOPMENT						
Land improvement	68,220.00	71,223.93	71,223.93	0.00	Soil prep., drilling seed, crew to remove exotic plants, burn crew, plants, herbicide, seed, etc.	
OTHER						
Travel expenses in Minnesota	500.00	500.00	436.17	63.83	mileage	
TOTAL LCMR Funding	90,000.00	90,000.00	89,685.41	314.59		
* On April 25, 2008 FMR requested a workplan change that sought to reallocate \$3,003.93 from the staff expenses portion of the budget to						