

Date of Report: Oct. 22, 1997
Date of Work Program Update: June 15, 1998
Date of Work plan Approval: June 25, 1997
Project Completion Date: See item V.B. page 3

10(c)

LCMR Work Program 1997

I. Project Title: RIM- Wildlife Habitat Stewardship

Project Managers: Richard Carlson, Wildlife Development
Affiliation: Department of Natural Resources
Mailing Address: Box 7, 500 Lafayette Road, St. Paul, MN 55155
Telephone No.: (612) 296-0705; **E-Mail:** dick.carlson@dnr.state.mn.us; **Fax:** (612) 297-4961

Total Biennial Project Budget: *Amounts in thousands*

Fund	Year	Approp.	Liquid.	Encumb.	Balance
RIM Wildlife Improvements					
(Bonding)	1994	1,315	1,120	52	143
RIM Wildlife Habitat Stewardship					
(Future Resources)	1995	450	447	3	0
RIM Wildlife Habitat Stewardship					
Bonding	1996	660	273	31	356
RIM Wildlife Habitat Stewardship					
(Environmental Trust Fund)	1997	<u>255</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>83</u>	<u>165</u>
TOTAL		2,680	1,847	169	664

A. Legal Citations:

1994 Appropriation

M.L. 1994, Chapter 643, Section 23, Subd. 18. \$2,000,000 RIM wildlife, natural areas and prairie bank improvements for development, protection or improvements of a capital nature to wildlife management areas, state lands, scientific and natural areas, and prairie bank areas throughout the State. Of this amount, \$1,315,000 is for wildlife management areas and other state lands, \$615,000 is for scientific and natural areas, and \$70,000 is for prairie bank areas. The commissioner shall determine project priorities as appropriate based upon need. Appropriations must be used for qualified capital expenditures.

This work program only reports on the \$1,315,000 wildlife management programs

1995 Appropriation

M.L. 1995, Chapter 220, Section 19, Subd. 10(c). \$450,000 This appropriation is from the future resources fund, to the commissioner of natural resources for improvement of wildlife habitat and natural plant communities statewide, both urban and rural public lands, to protect and enhance wildlife, native plant species and ecological diversity.

This appropriation has been divided as follows: \$260,000 wildlife management, \$120,000 SNA and \$70,000 Nongame. All allotments are reported in this work plan.

1996 Appropriation

M.L. 1996, Chap. 463, Sec. 7, Subd. 21. \$900,000 For development, protection, or improvement of a capital nature to wildlife management areas, state lands, scientific and natural areas and prairie bank areas throughout the state. The commissioner shall determine project priorities as appropriate based upon need.

This appropriation has been divided as follows: \$660,000 Wildlife management and \$240,000 scientific and natural areas. The \$660,000 wildlife management program is presented in this work program.

1997 Trust Fund Appropriation

M.L. 1997, Chapter 216, Sec 15, Subd. 17(j) RIM Wildlife Habitat Stewardship \$400,000. This appropriation is from the trust fund to the department of natural resources to accelerate the reinvestment in Minnesota program to improve wildlife habitat and natural plant communities statewide on public lands, both urban and rural, to protect and enhance wildlife, native plant species, and ecological diversity.

This appropriation has been divided as follows: \$255,000 Wildlife Management, \$120,000 scientific and natural areas, and \$25,000 nongame. The \$255,000 Wildlife Management is presented in this work program.

II. PROJECT SUMMARY

This stewardship program provides opportunities to accelerate the development, improvement, and enhancement of wildlife lands, wildlife habitat, natural communities and natural ecosystems on State Wildlife Management Areas (WMA) and other state land that is not available through normal appropriations.

Projects chosen to utilize appropriated funds are based on the statewide significance or cooperative nature of a projects followed by highest priority development activities. Projects vary depending upon the type and amount of funding involved. Bonding projects are ranked and submitted by each manager whereas, Environmental Trust fund or Natural Resources funds are allocated based on area resource needs. Project costs are cost coded in the state financial system for later capture and reporting. The currently funded regional activity listing for each objective is attached in the Appendices for informational purposes. Accomplishments and final costs normally vary from original estimates.

III.&IV OUTLINE OF RESULTS AND PROGRESS:

Property Protection and Recreation

Capital improvements and associated plant and animal communities found on WMA lands need to be protected and made available for public use. Boundary and informational signing is undertaken, erosion problems corrected and building sites cleaned up. Access roads, walking trails, water access, and primitive parking are needed for hunters and users. *See Appendix "A & C" for planned property protection and recreation enhancements by fund.*

<u>Appropriation</u>	<u>Planned</u>		<u>Completed</u>		<u>Budget</u>	<u>Spent</u>	<u>Balance</u>
	<u>Sites</u>		<u>Sites</u>				
1994 Bonding-WMA	370		313		473,100	379,600	93,500
1996 Bonding WMA	229		97		392,250	162,200	230,050
	599		410		865,350	541,800	323,550

An increased effort on WMA facilities occurred however, deep snows, and extensive spring flooding reduced much of the WMA field work. Much of the remaining '94 bonding funds has been tied to contracts that have not been completed.

Forest Uplands and Brushland Community -Development and Improvement

Forest stands and brushlands habitats need to be regenerated and improved to reestablish or perpetuate native plant communities such as aspen parklands. Prescribed burns and brush regeneration is utilized to reestablish viable brushland communities. Forest openings are seeded and forests managed to create desired forest conditions. *(Bonding funds are not used for prescribed burning).*

See Appendix tables for planned wildlife enhancements by fund.

<u>Appropriation</u>	<u>Planned</u>		<u>Completed</u>		<u>Budget</u>	<u>Spent</u>	<u>Balance</u>
	<u>Sites</u>	<u>Acres</u>	<u>Sites</u>	<u>Acres</u>			
1994 Bonding	225	5,302	480	4,380	250,000	235,900	14100
1995 FRF-WMA, Nongame	92	27,940	47	27,307	196,600	197,200	-600
1996 Bonding	155	2,412	19	1,233	109,400	45,000	6,440
1997 ETF-WMA	97	26,500	0	0	155,000	7,000	148,000
	569	62,154	546	32,920	711,000	485,100	225,900

The objective of burning nearly 27,900 acres of brushland and forest treatments was met with 27,300 acres burned. The management of brushland and forest stands continued with 1,678 additional acres being planted. Prescribed burning utilizing the recent ETF appropriation will start this spring.

Prairie, Grassland and Farmland Community - Development and Improvement

Newly purchased lands and old fields may have weed problems, lack nesting value and winter cover for resident wildlife. Native grasses are planted to reduce the reliance on weed control and provide nesting cover. Woody cover plantings are established for winter protection and prescribed burning is used to reduce weed problems, rejuvenate grasses and reduce woody plant invasion. (*Bonding funds are not used for prescribed burning*). See Appendix tables for planned wildlife enhancements by fund.

<u>Appropriation</u>	<u>Planned</u>		<u>Completed</u>		<u>Budget</u>	<u>Spent</u>	<u>Balance</u>
	<u>Sites</u>	<u>Acres</u>	<u>Sites</u>	<u>Acres</u>			
1994 Bonding	136	2,045	236	3,715	311,850	301,000	10,850
1995 FRF-WMA, Nongame	421	17,448	250	15,288	246,100	242,700	3,400
1996 Bonding	67	1,771	38	1,044	158,350	65,900	92,450
1997 ETF- WMA	933	18,500	0	0	100,000	0	100,000
	933	39,434	524	20,047	816,300	609,600	206,700

The objective of burning 17,400 acres of prairie grasses stands was not met with 15,288 acres burned. Wet spring conditions hampered burning projects. An additional 3,859 acres were planted to native grasses with the '94 bonding goal being exceeded. Major problems have been the reduction of support cost for the projects.

Wetland Community Development and Restoration

WMA purchases are oriented toward the restoration and protection of wetlands. Wetlands need to be restored or improved and older structures replaced. These activities improve water quality, lessen downstream flooding and most important provide wildlife habitat. Wetlands are restored, developed and improved. Water control structure are placed in outlets or tile lines to restore drained wetlands. Dikes and control structures are installed or replaced to retain wetland and allow for improved aquatics through water manipulation. See Appendix "A & B" for planned wildlife enhancements by fund.

<u>Appropriation</u>	<u>Planned</u>		<u>Completed</u>		<u>Budget</u>	<u>Spent</u>	<u>Balance</u>
	<u>Sites</u>	<u>Acres</u>	<u>Sites</u>	<u>Acres</u>			
1994 Bonding	27	12,082	39	9,748	280,050	181,000	132,300
1995 FRF-WMA, Nongame	3	80	0	0	7,300	7,100	200
	30	12,082	42	9,828	320,600	188,100	132,500

The cooperative Minnesota Lake is nearing completion. A greater amount of work was being accomplished on wetland restoration than originally planned. Most engineering had now been completed.

V. CONTEXT

A. Significance:

The Reinvest in Minnesota program provides critical funding to the further enhancement and improvement of public lands to benefit wildlife populations, improve hunting and trapping opportunities and other wildlife related activities. The legislative funding has greatly increased the opportunity for Minnesota's citizens to enjoy wildlife and our natural heritage beyond hunting license or nongame check off revenues. These funds provide a major benefit to the overall quality of life, strength of the environment, community and the economy.

B. Time:

1994 Bonding - approximately 1998
1995 Future Resources - June 30, 1997
1996 Bonding - approximately 1999
1997 Environmental Trust - June 30, 1999

Use of State Employees:

a. Type and Amount of Salaries

Seasonal labors, natural resource technicians and assistant area wildlife managers may be paid with these funds to conduct and assist in undertaking projects in this work program such as habitat development, or restoration projects on State wildlife management areas and selected natural resource lands. These positions are classified and unclassified.

During the FY98/99 biennium the Section of Wildlife has reduced staff time available for forest wildlife projects, such as prescribed burning, because of reductions in funding from the deer management account. To maintain the prescribed burn activity, staff affected by these reductions, the plan to use ETF funding when undertaking approved burn projects.

b. Employee Qualifications

To implement the projects in the work program, specialized skill (wildlife identification, habitat knowledge and management implications) is required. Classified DNR Fish and Wildlife staff employees have the training, experience and certifications required to do these specialized tasks and are usually the best qualified to do these projects.

c. Expense to the State

Other options are considered to implement projects. Often hiring additional unclassified employees is impractical because they lack appropriate knowledge or would require extensive training while some staff with necessary skill are less than full-time. Contracts with outside biologists or heavy equipment operators are used when possible, but contractors are not available for some projects.

d. Supplemental Nature of Appropriation

Seasonal or part-time employees work is based on available funds. Time spent on approved projects may be charged to these funds. Without these funds, none of the projects in this work program would be completed. They are an acceleration of these initiatives.

VI. COOPERATION

Area Wildlife managers and other project personnel coordinate with other DNR divisions, counties, public and the many agencies involved in issuing permits or review of projects.

VII. DISSEMINATION: NA

VIII. LOCATION: Ecological classification location:

Statewide Projects are located in each ecological Landscape.

IX. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS:

Semiannual work program update reports submitted by:

June 15, 1998

October 15, 1998

June 15, 1999

October 15, 1999

Wildlife and Critical Habitat Development Activity Glossary

Property Protection and Recreation

Gates, Parking, Camping, Blinds

The construction or improvement of facilities designed to be used by the public such as grass parking areas to provide safe parking and gates to restrict vehicle traffic. Hunting blinds to control shooting lines or observation platforms to provide educational opportunities may also be provided.

WMA Signing & Site Cleanup

The installation of signs or fences on Wildlife Area boundaries and activities that protect unit resources including well sealing, building and dump site cleanup, or measures to eliminate soil erosion.

WMA and Water Access

The development and improvement of infrastructure roads, walking trails and water access sites for public and management purposes.

Prairie, grassland and Farmland community development

Grassland Development

The establishment and improvement of grasses to reduce the need for weed control and improve nesting cover for game and song birds. Native grasses are the primary species planted.

Prairie Grassland Burns

The use of prescribed burn techniques to enhance prairie plant communities by replenishing native plants and retard woody plants and cool season grasses.

Woody Cover Development

The establishment and improvement of tree and shrub plantings to provide spring nesting and adding a woody cover for winter protection in open landscapes.

Forest Uplands and Brushland Community development

Brushland Regeneration

The rejuvenation of brushland communities through selective cutting or mechanical techniques to regenerate brush and tree species that have become oversized and dominate sedge and grass components.

Forest Habitat Regeneration

The enhancement of forest stands for wildlife benefits through selective cutting or mechanical treatments. Also included are thermal cover planting, thinning stands for mast regeneration, and rejuvenating browse species.

Forest Opening Development or Improvement

The establishment or improvement of forest openings by removing invading woody species, seeding clover and grasses on log landings and forest trails to provide forest edges.

Forest and brushland Prescribed Burns

The use of burning to remove older and stimulate new plant growth to improve wildlife habitats and plant communities.

Wetland Community development and Restoration

Wetland Restoration

The restoration or creation of wetlands by restoring natural drainages, adding a water control structure and dikes to manage wetland water levels.

Wetland Improvements

The replacement or improvement of water control structures, spillways, outlet channels and dikes to maintain wetland projects. Improvements may include various vegetative or water management techniques including the installation of fish barriers, island development, and related structures.

Appendix A RIM Wildlife Stewardship Projects

	Region	Plan Sites	Units	Projcost
RIM Bonding 1994 - Approved				
Property Protection and Recreation				
Gates, Parking, Camping,Blinds				
	Metro Region	18	MgtUnits	\$7,000.00
	Northcentral Region	44	MgtUnits	\$42,600.00
	Northeast Region	25	MgtUnits	\$17,900.00
	Northwest Region	22	MgtUnits	\$11,500.00
	Southeast Region	6	MgtUnits	\$6,500.00
	Southwest Region	30	MgtUnits	\$23,550.00
	Activity Total:	145		\$109,050.00
WMA Signing & Site Cleanup				
	Metro Region	5	WMAs	\$7,800.00
	Northcentral Region	36	WMAs	\$31,850.00
	Northeast Region	8	WMAs	\$11,350.00
	Northwest Region	24	WMAs	\$29,350.00
	Southeast Region	27	WMAs	\$28,750.00
	Southwest Region	67	WMAs	\$110,300.00
	Activity Total:	167		\$219,400.00
WMA and Water Access				
	Metro Region	1	Roads	\$6,500.00
	Northcentral Region	1	Accesses	\$1,400.00
	Northcentral Region	11	Roads	\$34,600.00
	Northeast Region	3	Accesses	
	Northeast Region	12	Roads	\$44,000.00
	Northwest Region	1	Accesses	\$4,500.00
	Northwest Region	7	Roads	\$36,500.00
	Southeast Region	15	Roads	\$6,000.00
	Southwest Region	7	Roads	\$11,150.00
	Activity Total:	58		\$144,650.00
	Program Total	370		\$473,100.00
Forest/Brushland Stewardship				
Brushland Regeneration				
	Northcentral Region	11	Complexes	\$22,500.00
	Northeast Region	12	Complexes	\$78,100.00
	Northwest Region	27	Complexes	\$57,400.00
	Activity Total:	50		\$158,000.00
Forest Habitat Regeneration				
	Northcentral Region	13	Stands	\$14,500.00
	Northcentral Region	15	Openings	\$4,000.00
	Northeast Region	8	Stands	\$25,300.00
	Northeast Region	68	Openings	\$15,600.00
	Northwest Region	24	Stands	\$15,000.00
	Northwest Region	33	Openings	\$4,000.00
	Southeast Region	14	Stands	\$13,600.00
	Activity Total:	175		\$92,000.00
	Program Total	225		\$250,000.00
Farmland/Grassland Stewardship				
Farmland Winter Cover				
	Northcentral Region	4	Plantings	\$4,000.00
	Northwest Region	2	Plantings	\$5,000.00
	Southeast Region	14	Plantings	\$9,200.00
	Southwest Region	22	Plantings	\$41,600.00
	Activity Total:	42		\$59,800.00
Prairie Grassland Plantings				
	Metro Region	3	Plantings	\$16,600.00
	Northcentral Region	11	Plantings	\$6,700.00
	Northwest Region	26	Plantings	\$35,800.00
	Southeast Region	10	Plantings	\$7,000.00
	Southwest Region	44	Plantings	\$152,700.00
	Activity Total:	94		\$218,800.00
	Program Total	136		\$278,600.00

10/21/97

Appendix A RIM Wildlife Stewardship Projects

	Region	Plan Sites	Units	Projcost
RIM Bonding 1994 - Approved				
Wetland Stewardship				
Wetland Improvements				
	Metro Region	3	Dikes/Stru	\$10,500.00
	Northeast Region	2	Dikes/Stru	\$18,800.00
	Northwest Region	4	Dikes/Stru	\$25,150.00
	Proj. Contingencies		Dikes/Stru	\$33,250.00
	Southwest Region	2	Dikes/Stru	\$117,600.00
	Activity Total:	11		\$205,300.00
Wetland Restorations				
	Northcentral Region	5	Wetlands	\$12,000.00
	Southwest Region	11	Wetlands	\$96,000.00
	Activity Total:	16		\$108,000.00
	Program Total	27		\$313,300.00
	Appropriation Total:			\$1,315,000.00

Appendix B RIM Wildlife Stewardship Projects

	Region	Plan Sites	Units	Procost
Future Resources '95 -Approved				
Forest/Brushland Stewardship				
Forest & Brushland Burns				
	Northcentral Region	16	Burns	\$19,000.00
	Northeast Region	16	Burns	\$69,800.00
	Northwest Region	39	Burns	\$60,800.00
	Southeast Region	2	Firebreaks	\$2,000.00
	Activity Total:	73		\$151,600.00
Nongame				
	Northcentral Region	1	Sites	\$11,600.00
	Northeast Region	9	Sites	\$11,600.00
	Northwest Region	3	Sites	\$9,800.00
	Southeast Region	6	Sites	\$12,000.00
	Activity Total:	19		\$45,000.00
	Program Total	92		\$196,600.00
Farmland/Grassland Stewardship				
Nongame				
	Metro Region	64	Sites	\$6,100.00
	Southwest Region	15	Sites	\$11,600.00
	Activity Total:	79		\$17,700.00
Prairie Grassland Burns				
	Metro Region	16	Burns	\$2,500.00
	Northcentral Region	19	Burns	\$6,500.00
	Northwest Region	33	Burns	\$25,700.00
	Southeast Region	34	Burns	\$3,800.00
	Southwest Region	187	Burns	\$69,900.00
	Statewide SNA	50	Burns	\$115,000.00
	Activity Total:	339		\$223,400.00
Prairie Grassland Plantings				
	Statewide SNA	3	Plantings	\$5,000.00
	Activity Total:	3		\$5,000.00
	Program Total	421		\$246,100.00
Wetland Stewardship				
Nongame				
	Metro Region	2	Sites	\$5,500.00
	Northwest Region	1	Sites	\$1,800.00
	Activity Total:	3		\$7,300.00
	Program Total	3		\$7,300.00
Appropriation Total:				\$450,000.00

Appendix C RIM Wildlife Stewardship Projects

	Region	Plan Sites	Units	Projcost
RIM Bonding 1996 - Approved				
Property Protection and Recreation				
Gates, Parking, Camping,Blinds				
	Metro Region	13	MgtUnits	\$11,000.00
	Northcentral Region	7	MgtUnits	\$3,500.00
	Northeast Region	9	MgtUnits	\$7,100.00
	Northwest Region	13	MgtUnits	\$14,200.00
	Southeast Region	4	MgtUnits	\$6,500.00
	Southwest Region	19	MgtUnits	\$16,500.00
	Activity Total:	65		\$58,800.00
WMA Signing & Site Cleanup				
	Metro Region	6	WMAs	\$2,240.00
	Northcentral Region	22	WMAs	\$29,850.00
	Northeast Region	2	WMAs	\$12,000.00
	Northwest Region	17	WMAs	\$19,950.00
	Southeast Region	12	WMAs	\$8,360.00
	Southwest Region	36	WMAs	\$15,600.00
	Activity Total:	95		\$88,000.00
WMA and Water Access				
	Contingencies / Eng		Roads	\$20,100.00
	Metro Region	1	Roads	\$17,500.00
	Metro Region	5	Accesses	\$8,100.00
	Northcentral Region	2	Roads	\$12,000.00
	Northcentral Region	3	Trails	\$3,000.00
	Northeast Region	1	Trails	\$7,200.00
	Northeast Region	3	Accesses	\$4,500.00
	Northeast Region	4	Roads	\$42,600.00
	Northwest Region	1	Accesses	\$4,400.00
	Northwest Region	1	Bridge	\$10,100.00
	Northwest Region	2	Trails	\$4,100.00
	Northwest Region	12	Roads	\$75,400.00
	Southwest Region	2	Accesses	\$7,400.00
	Southwest Region	32	Roads	\$29,050.00
	Activity Total:	69		\$245,450.00
	Program Total	229		\$392,250.00
Forest/Brushland Stewardship				
Brushland Regeneration				
	Northcentral Region	12	Complexes	\$32,500.00
	Northeast Region	7	Complexes	\$37,500.00
	Northwest Region	25	Complexes	\$33,700.00
	Activity Total:	44		\$103,700.00
Forest Habitat Regeneration				
	Northeast Region	110	Seedings	\$5,200.00
	Northwest Region	1	Seedings	\$500.00
	Activity Total:	111		\$5,700.00
	Program Total	155		\$109,400.00
Farmland/Grassland Stewardship				
Prairie Grassland Plantings				
	Metro Region	2	Plantings	\$20,000.00
	Northcentral Region	8	Plantings	\$33,600.00
	Northeast Region	1	Plantings	\$5,500.00
	Northwest Region	5	Plantings	\$28,600.00
	Southeast Region	1	Plantings	\$9,200.00
	Southwest Region	50	Plantings	\$61,450.00
	Activity Total:	67		\$158,350.00
	Program Total	67		\$158,350.00
Appropriation Total:				\$660,000.00

10/21/97

Appendix D RIM Wildlife Stewardship Projects

	Region	Plan Sites	Units	Projcost
Environ. Trust 1997 - Appr.				
Forest/Brushland Stewardship				
Forest & Brushland Burns				
	Northcentral Region	10	Burns	\$23,100.00
	Northeast Region	10	Burns	\$29,100.00
	Northwest Region	60	Burns	\$85,200.00
	Southeast Region	17	Burns	\$17,600.00
	Activity Total:	97		\$155,000.00
	Program Total	97		\$155,000.00
Farmland/Grassland Stewardship				
Prairie Grassland Burns				
	Metro Region	18	Burns	\$5,800.00
	Northcentral Region	25	Burns	\$9,000.00
	Northeast Region	20	Burns	\$22,500.00
	Northwest Region	41	Burns	\$26,900.00
	Southeast Region	25	Burns	\$6,800.00
	Southwest Region	180	Burns	\$29,000.00
	Activity Total:	309		\$100,000.00
	Program Total	309		\$100,000.00
	Appropriation Total:			\$255,000.00