

# FINAL REPORT

SEP 12 2005

Sandy Smith

From: Leslie Tannahill [Leslie.Tannahill@dnr.state.mn.us]  
 Sent: Monday, September 12, 2005 12:43 PM  
 To: lcmr@commissions.leg.state.mn.us  
 Subject: HCP Phase I--Wildlife's Final Report

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WMAs Phase I FINAL.doc    WMAs Glossary Attachment Final...    WMAs Phase 1 Abstract.doc    WMAs Phase I Attach A 0805.xls...    WMAs Attach B & C Phase I 080...

Attached please find our final report and attachments for Phase I--Wildlife Management Areas (2g) of the Habitat Corridors Partnership. Thanks for your assistance and patience with this report. Please let me know if there is anything else you need.

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*2001 HCP 2g*

## **2001 Project Abstract**

For the Period Ending June 30, 2005

**Project Title:** Restoring Minnesota's Fish and Wildlife Habitat Corridors: CH-01

Wildlife Area Management (2g)

Area 1: Aspen Parklands

Area 2: Mississippi Headwaters

Area 3: Border Prairie

Area 4: Central Lakes

Area 5: Lower St. Louis River

Area 6: Upper Minnesota River

Area 7: Alexandria Moraine

Area 8: Big Woods – North

Area 9: Des Moines River Valley

Area 10 Southern Lakes

Area 11: Mississippi Bluff Lands

**Project Manger:** Dennis E. Simon

**Affiliation:** Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, Division of Wildlife

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**Fax:** 651 297-4961

**Web Page Address:** [www.dnr.state.mn.us](http://www.dnr.state.mn.us)

**FUND:** Restoring MN Fish & Wildlife Habitat Corridors (ETF) 2001

**LEGAL CITATION:** ML 2001, 1<sup>st</sup> Special Session, Ch. 2, Sec. 14, Subd. 04(e)

**APPROPRIATION AMOUNT:** \$611,096

### Overall Project Outcome and Results

The Minnesota DNR Division of Fish and Wildlife implemented or provided oversight for infrastructure management and habitat restoration on lands acquired by partners to become State Wildlife Management Areas (WMA) to ensure that DNR did not incur a significant short-term liability for initial site development. Wildlife staff coordinated with and provided technical guidance to partners in preparing initial site management and restoration plans and in implementing these plans on lands acquired in Areas 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 & 11. While the amount of work that would be accomplished was dependent on the acquisition success of partners, DNR estimated that 2,500 acres of habitat would be developed; the final total was 2,545 acres.

Infrastructure management included but was not limited to boundary surveys, boundary signing, public access, parking lot and user facilities, and old building, site or well clean up. Habitat restoration included but was not limited to grassland development or improvement, wetland restoration or impoundment development, forest or woody cover development or improvement, brushland management, and food plot development. The work was accomplished by DNR staff, through contracts with local vendors, or by volunteers from the partners' local chapter.

Digital boundary, habitat inventory and facilities files were developed as part of the management plans and incorporated into the Minnesota WMA system. This information is also available on the DNR web site at [www.dnr.state.mn.us](http://www.dnr.state.mn.us).

The nineteen new tracts covering over 3,000 acres acquired by partners now have cover, and are signed, posted, and open for public use.

### Project Results Use and Dissemination

This project was completed on June 30, 2005. Information on the new tracts is available on the DNR's website at [www.dnr.state.mn.us](http://www.dnr.state.mn.us), or by contacting the local Area Wildlife Manager.

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**Date of Report:** September 12, 2005

**LCMR Work Program Final Report**

**Date of Next Status Report:** NA

**Date of Work Program Approval:** July 24, 2001. Amendments Approved: August 28, 2003, October 14, 2003, February 10, 2004, July 1, 2004, December 8, 2004, May 25, 2005.

**Project Completion Date:** June 30, 2005

## **LCMR Work Program 2001**

**I. Project Title:** Restoring Minnesota's Fish and Wildlife Habitat Corridors: CH-01

Wildlife Area Management (2g)

Area 1: Aspen Parklands

Area 2: Mississippi Headwaters

Area 3: Border Prairie

Area 4: Central Lakes

Area 5: Lower St. Louis River

Area 6: Upper Minnesota River

Area 7: Alexandria Moraine

Area 8: Big Woods – North

Area 9: Des Moines River Valley

Area 10 Southern Lakes

Area 11: Mississippi Bluff Lands

**Project Manger:** Dennis E. Simon

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**Fax:** 651 297-4961

**Web Page Address:** [www.dnr.state.mn.us](http://www.dnr.state.mn.us)

**Total Biennial Project Budget:** \$611,096

### **Fund**

Restoring MN Fish & Wildlife Habitat Corridors (ETF) 2001

<b><u>Allocated</u></b>	<b><u>Liquid.</u></b>	<b><u>Encumb.</u></b>	<b><u>Balance</u></b>
\$611,096	\$605,374	\$0	\$5,722

**Legal Citation:** ML 2001, 1<sup>st</sup> Special Session, Chap.2, Sec. 14, Subd. 04(e)

### **Appropriation Language:**

4 (e) Restoring Minnesota's Fish and Wildlife Habitat Corridors \$5,873,000 the first year and \$5,872,000 the second year are from the trust fund to the commissioner of natural resources for acceleration of agency programs and cooperative agreements with Minnesota Waterfowl Association, Minnesota Deer Hunters Association, Ducks Unlimited, Inc., National Wild Turkey Federation, Pheasants Forever, The Nature Conservancy, Minnesota Land Trust, Trust for

Public Land, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Natural Resources Conservation Service, and the U.S. Forest Service to restore and acquire fragmented landscape corridors that connect areas of quality habitat to sustain fish, wildlife, and plants. \$352,000 is for program coordination, corridor identification, and mapping. \$3,343,000 is for restoration and management activities in wildlife management areas, wetland habitat, lakes, wild rice beds, grasslands, and fisheries habitat. \$2,650,000 is for conservation easement programs on riparian areas, big woods forests, native prairies, and wetlands. \$5,400,000 is for habitat acquisition activities on prairies, riparian areas, and other fish and wildlife habitat corridors. As part of the required work program, criteria and priorities for planned acquisition and restoration activities must be submitted to the legislative commission on Minnesota resources for review and approval. Land acquired with this appropriation must be sufficiently improved to meet at least minimum management standards as determined by the commissioner of natural resources. 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 so designate any lands acquired in less than fee title. This appropriation is available until June 30, 2004, at which time the project must be completed and final products delivered, unless an earlier date is specified in the work program.

**Carryforward Language:** The availability of the appropriations for the following project is extended to June 30, 2006: HF 2212, 5th Engrossment, 83rd Legislative Session ML 2004, Ch. 255, Sec. 47, Subd. (c).

**Sec. 47. [MINNESOTA FUTURE RESOURCES FUND; ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES TRUST FUND; APPROPRIATIONS CARRYFORWARD.]**

(a) The availability of the appropriations for the following projects is extended to June 30, 2005, or for the period of any federal money received for the project: Laws 1999, chapter 231, section 16, subdivision 4, paragraph (b), as extended by Laws 2001, First Special Session chapter 2, section 14, subdivision 18, paragraph (b), Mesabi trail land acquisition and development-continuation; and Laws 2001, First Special Session chapter 2, section 14, subdivision 5, paragraph (i), as extended by Laws 2003, chapter 128, article 1, section 9, subdivision 20, paragraph (a), Gateway trail bridge.

(b) The availability of the appropriation for the following project is extended to June 30, 2006: Laws 2003, chapter 128, article 1, section 9, subdivision 11, paragraph (b), bucks and buckthorn: engaging young hunters in restoration.

(c) The availability of the appropriation for the following project is extended to June 30, 2006: Laws 2001, First Special Session chapter 2, section 14, subdivision 4, paragraph (e), restoring Minnesota's fish and wildlife habitat corridors, and after June 30, 2004, the appropriation may be spent as provided in Laws 2003, chapter 128, article 1, section 9, subdivision 5, paragraph (a), restoring Minnesota's fish and wildlife habitat corridors-phase II.

[EFFECTIVE DATE.] This section is effective the day following final enactment.

**II. and III. FINAL PROJECT SUMMARY:**

The Minnesota DNR Division of Fish and Wildlife implemented or provided oversight for infrastructure management and habitat restoration on lands acquired by partners to become

State Wildlife Management Areas (WMA) to ensure that DNR did not incur a significant short-term liability for initial site development. Wildlife staff coordinated with and provided technical guidance to partners in preparing initial site management and restoration plans and in implementing these plans on lands acquired in Areas 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 & 11. While the amount of work that would be accomplished was dependent on the acquisition success of partners, DNR estimated that 2,500 acres of habitat would be developed; the final total was 2,545 acres.

Infrastructure management included but was not limited to boundary surveys, boundary signing, public access, parking lot and user facilities, and old building, site or well clean up. Habitat restoration included but was not limited to grassland development or improvement, wetland restoration or impoundment development, forest or woody cover development or improvement, brushland management, and food plot development. The work was accomplished by DNR staff, through contracts with local vendors, or by volunteers from the partners' local chapter.

Digital boundary, habitat inventory and facilities files were developed as part of the management plans and incorporated into the Minnesota WMA system. This information is also available on the DNR web site at [www.dnr.state.mn.us](http://www.dnr.state.mn.us).

The nineteen new tracts covering over 3,000 acres acquired by partners now have cover, and are signed, posted, and open for public use.

#### **IV. OUTLINE OF PROJECT RESULTS:**

**Result 1:** Site reviews were conducted of all acquired lands and digital boundary, habitat and facilities files prepared for inclusion into the DNR WMA GIS. Central Office staff coordinated with partners and Area Wildlife Managers to prepare detailed initial restoration and management plans for each new WMA. Technical assistance was provided to partners in implementing management plans and summarizing accomplishments in Areas 1,2,3,4, 5, 6,7,8, 9,10, & 11. As most of the partners did not have the capability to do the required GIS work, DNR staff completed this. The challenge with this part of the project was making sure the appropriate data was collected staff, information on new acquisitions was received in a timely manner from partners, and setting up internal accounting and reporting systems to produce accurate progress reports.

**Result 1: Allocated: \$5,381    Liquid: \$5,381    Balance: \$0**  
**Areas 1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10, & 11**

**Completion Date:** June 30, 2004

**Result 2:** DNR staff developed and implemented management and habitat practices as outlined in management plans on 19 new tracts of land acquired by partners and turned over to the DNR for long-term management. Implementation included 33.7 miles of boundary surveys and other boundary management activities; the purchase and on the ground installation of facilities and habitat materials (e.g. seed, seedlings, water control structures, etc.) and initial prescribed burning and weed control on 2,545 acres; the cleanup of 14 different sites or buildings; and the development or improvement of 15 parking lots. This work was accomplished

by using contractors, labor and equipment provided by local partner chapters and/or DNR personnel and equipment.

The initial site development of the 19 new tracts was completed to the satisfaction of the DNR and various partners. Partner coordination improved greatly as everyone became familiar with the program and DNR requirements for initial development of WMAs.

DNR was unable to expend all of the funds turned over by other partners due to the late date, completion of existing projects, and lack of new acquisitions by partners at this time.

**Result 2: Allocated: \$605,715 Liquidated: \$599,993 Balance: \$5,722**  
**Areas 1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10 & 11**

**Completion Date:** June 30, 2005

**V. TOTAL PROJECT BUDGET:**

	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Expenditure</b>	<b>Balance</b>
<b>All Results: Personnel</b>	\$33,559	\$33,366	\$193
<b>All Results: Equipment</b>	\$822	\$822	\$0
<b>All Results: Development</b>	\$555,715	\$550,343	\$5,372
<b>All Results: Acquisition</b>	\$0	\$0	\$0
<b>All Results: Vehicle expenses</b>	\$21,000	\$20,843	\$157
<b>TOTAL BUDGET</b>	<b>\$611,096</b>	<b>\$605,374</b>	<b>\$5,722</b>

- A. See Attachment A for budget details
- B. See Attachment E (Glossary) for descriptions of development and restoration work.

**December 3, 2004**

Approval was received on December 8 to extend the project completion end date to June 30, 2005 for this work program only. This would allow us to work on the Chisholm WMA-Slate Tract that is just now being acquired by two of the partners, and perform follow up maintenance on other WMAs already turned over to us by partners. A final report will be submitted on August 1, 2005, which allows time for all payments to be processed after the June 30 completion date.

**June 29, 2004**

An amendment was requested on this date and approved on July 1, 2004 to extend the project completion date to December 31, 2004 for this work program only. Development of new WMAs within the existing work program dates is contingent upon partners acquiring land in a timely manner. Because of delays in completing these acquisitions, we will be unable to complete the required development work by the existing project end date of June 30, 2004. The additional time will allow us to compensate for the time lag and meet program requirements for development of new WMAs acquired by partners.

**VI. PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE SPENDING:**

**A. Past Spending:** Minnesota DNR Division of Wildlife spends approximately \$8.3 million annually for habitat restoration and management on Wildlife Management Areas.

**B. Current and Future Spending:** It is anticipated that most initial management and habitat restoration costs will be borne by this project. Some use of existing Game & Fish funded personnel and equipment may be necessary for efficient implementation of field projects and GIS data capture. Salaries and expenses for the DNR Division of Fish and Wildlife's Project Manager are funded by the Game & Fish fund.

Larger habitat restorations that go beyond the scope of initial improvements and long term habitat maintenance costs will be considered from DNR Game and Fish funds, General Funds, Heritage Enhancement and bonding sources.

**C: Project Partners:**

Susan Schmidt	Trust for Public Lands
Matt Holland	Pheasants Forever
Ron Nargang	The Nature Conservancy
Mark Johnson	Minnesota Deer Hunters Association
Tom Glines	National Wild Turkey Federation
Ron Nargang	The Nature Conservancy
Dennis Simon	Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (No Cost to Project)

**D. Time:** July 1, 2001 – June 30, 2005

**VII. DISSIMINATION:**

Wildlife Management Areas acquired and developed through this project will be open for public recreation and have appropriate signs erected acknowledging this project, the partners and funding sources. New WMAs acquired will be included in published maps of WMA locations. WMA boundaries and other appropriate information will be included on the DNR Web page.

**VIII. LOCATION:**

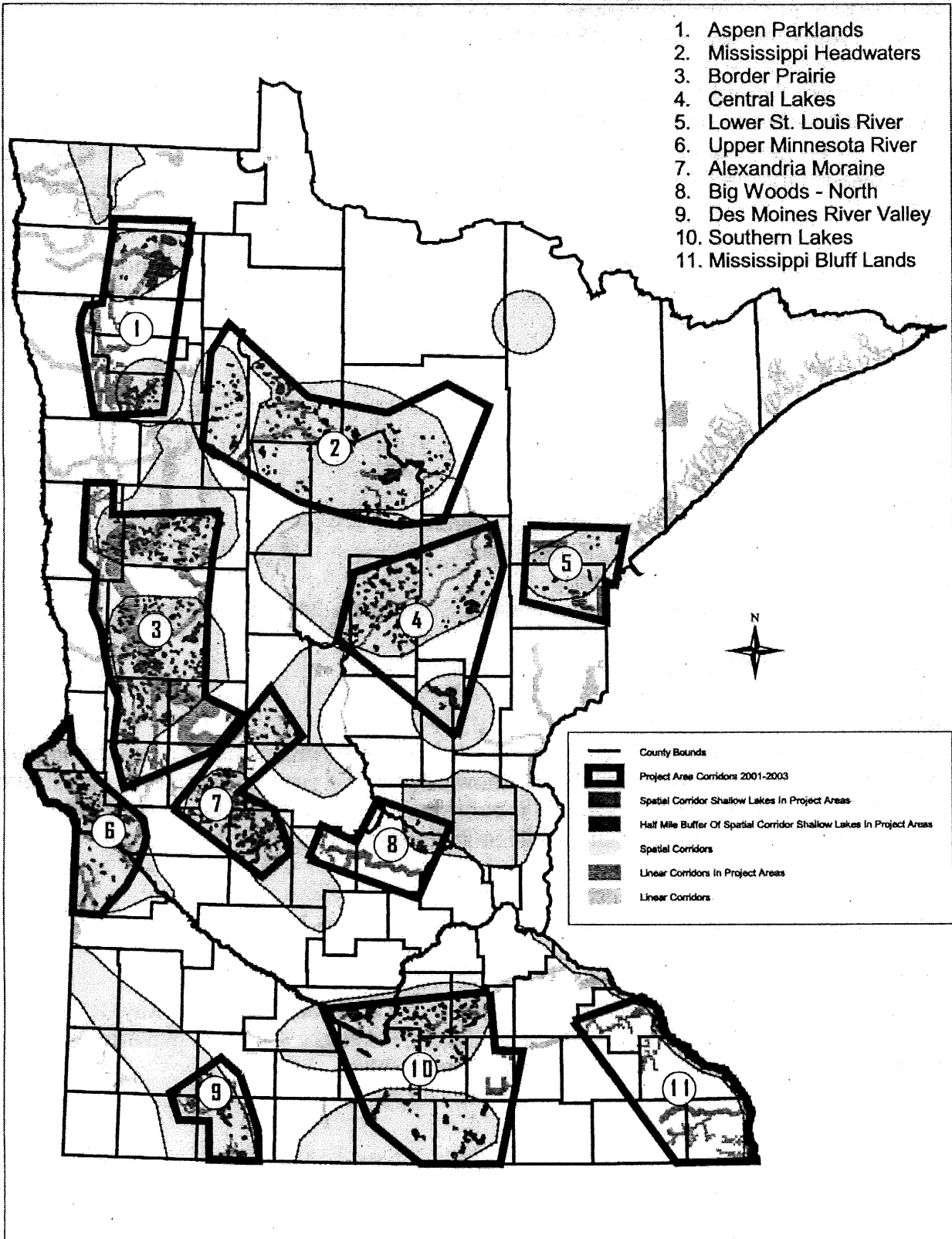
WMA lands managed under this project will be in Areas 1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10,11 on Figure 1.

**IX. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS:**

Periodic workprogram progress reports will be submitted to LCMR not later than May 31, 2002; November 30, 2002; March 30, 2003; November 30, 2003, February 15, 2004, November 17, 2004. A final workprogram report will be submitted by September 7, 2005.



Figure 1.



## **Attachment E Glossary**

2001 LCMR Project  
CH-01 Restoring Minnesota's Fish and Wildlife Habitat Corridors: Wildlife Area  
Management (2g)

### **September 12, 2005**

This glossary describes the detailed activities included in various budget items listed in Attachment A.

### **Wages, Salaries, and Benefits**

Temporary staff - Unclassified personnel who work all or part-time on this project.

Seasonal staff - Classified personnel who have their normal work season extended to work part-time on this project. This project supplements and does not supplant their base salary funding.

### **Professional Technical Contracts**

Vendor land surveys - Contracts to private vendors for professional land surveys.

DNR land surveys - Professional service charges by DNR land survey crews.

**Habitat Restoration** - Costs incurred by DNR and private vendors including but not limited to:

#### Prairie Management

##### *Prairie/Grassland Burns*

The use of prescribed burning to restore remnant or planted native prairie and other grassland communities and related wildlife habitat. Also includes firebreak development.

##### *Prairie/Grassland Management*

All efforts related to the initial planting of native prairie/cool season grasslands as well as efforts undertaken to improve existing stands of grass by converting cool season stands to native grass, interseeding with additional grass or forbs, or brushing out invading woody vegetation. This includes the necessary follow up management needed to establish the cover (e.g. clipping, spot mowing or spot herbicide), harvesting and cleaning local native grass seed to be used for native prairie planting, efforts to stop erosion in grasslands and addition of nesting structures such as bluebird or kestrel houses.

#### Woody Cover Development

The initial effort, and all follow up efforts to establish woody cover for the improvement of farmland wildlife habitat for the first 5 years after planting. Include all replacement of stock as part of establishment costs.

### Wetland Management

These activities may include environmental review, archaeological survey, various permits, and engineering services.

#### *Wetland Impoundment Development*

The development of a new wetland where none historically existed by constructing a dike and water control structure in the appropriate topographic area.

#### *Wetland Restoration*

The restoration of a drained wetland by the plugging of drainage ditches or removal of drain tiles. Often a new water control structure and dike is necessary to contain water within property boundaries.

#### *Wetland Water Controls*

The addition or rehabilitation of water control structures, fish barriers, dikes and related inlets and outlets that enhance the value of existing wetland habitat.

### Forest Management

#### *Forest Stand Burns*

The use of prescribed burning to restore forest communities and related wildlife habitat including openings. Includes firebreak development.

### Openland/Brushland Management

#### *Openland/Brushland Burns*

The use of prescribed burning to restore brushland communities and related wildlife habitat. Includes firebreak development.

#### *Openland/Brushland Management*

Non-prescribed burn efforts (i.e., shearing, herbicides, etc.) relating to the restoration of brushland habitats and related complexes.

**Vehicle Expenses** – DNR fleet operating costs for vehicles, tractors, and other equipment.

**Other Land Improvement** – Other land improvement activities not listed above, including but not limited to those listed below. These activities may include environmental review, archaeological survey, various permits, and engineering services.

#### *Boundary Management*

The installation and maintenance of both interior and perimeter signs (including boundary, entrance, and information signs), fencing and gates on management units.

#### *Site/Building Cleanup/Well Sealing*

The cleanup (i.e., remove dumps, old buildings, debris, fences, etc.) of WMAs and sealing of old wells and cisterns for protection of surrounding environmental conditions and public use.

*User Facility Development and Improvement*

The development or significant improvement of facilities, such as parking lots with gates.

*Access Development and Improvement*

The development or significant improvement of roads, trails, and water access sites to provide public or management unit access. Water access development includes all associated parking facilities and gates.

Improvement includes reshaping, culvert repair or replacement, resurfacing of dirt surfaces with gravel, etc.

**Attachment A. Deliverable Products and Related Budget Amendment**

**Date of Report:** September 12, 2005

LCMR funds only

2001 LCMR Project Biennial Budget

CH-01 Restoring Minnesota's Fish and Wildlife Habitat Corridors: Wildlife Area Management (2g)

<b>BUDGET ITEM*</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>RESULT 1 BUDGET</b>	<b>RESULT 2 BUDGET</b>	<b>TOTAL BUDGET</b>	<b>EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>BALANCE</b>
<b>Wages, salaries &amp; benefits</b>	Temporary and seasonal staff	\$4,559	\$29,000	\$33,559	\$33,366	\$193
<b>Professional technical contracts</b>	Engineering vendors for boundary surveys on new acquisitions	\$0	\$78,368	\$78,368	\$82,102	-\$3,734
<b>Habitat development and restoration</b>	Prairie, wetland, forest, and openland/brushland mangement, and woody cover development	\$0	\$425,347	\$425,347	\$420,579	\$4,768
<b>Vehicle expenses</b>	Fleet and equipment costs and fuel	\$0	\$21,000	\$21,000	\$20,843	\$157
<b>Office equipment &amp; computers</b>	ArcView software	\$822	\$0	\$822	\$822	\$0
<b>Other land improvement</b>	Boundary management, site/building cleanup/well sealing, user facility development and improvement, access development and improvement	\$0	\$52,000	\$52,000	\$47,662	\$4,338
<b>Total LCMR Budget</b>		<b>\$5,381</b>	<b>\$605,715</b>	<b>\$611,096</b>	<b>\$605,374</b>	<b>\$5,722</b>

\*Specific descriptions of activities included in each Budget Item are included in the Glossary in Attachment E.



**Attachment C -- Habitat Corridors Partnership PHASE I -- Individual Work Program Summary by Project Area**

**September 12, 2005 Progress Report for All Completed Activities thru 6/30/05**

Work Program: Partner: MNDNR-Wildlife (2g)	LCMR Funds						Other Funds					
	LCMR Dollars Expended	Acquisition Acres	Easement Acres	Restoration Acres	Shore Miles	Misc.	Other Funds Expended	Acquisition Acres	Easement Acres	Restoration Acres	Shore Miles	Misc.
<b>PROJECT AREA 1</b>												
<b>Aspen Parklands</b>												
<i>Chicog WMA</i>	\$79,486			1,186			Additional activities: 4.5 miles of bdry mgmt, 10 site/bldg cleanup					
<b>PROJECT AREA 2</b>												
<b>Mississippi Headwaters</b>												
<b>PROJECT AREA 3</b>												
<b>Border Prairie</b>												
<i>Dolven, Doran, Eldorado, Elmo, Hornings Pit, Rothsay WMAs</i>	\$152,853			721			Additional activities: 10.25 miles bdry mgmt, 2 site/bldg cleanup, 7 facilities devel					
<b>PROJECT AREA 4</b>												
<b>Central Lakes</b>												
<b>PROJECT AREA 5</b>												
<b>Lower St. Louis River</b>												
<b>PROJECT AREA 6</b>												
<b>Upper Minnesota River</b>												
<i>Quillitz WMA</i>	\$137			0			Additional activities: .75 miles bdry mgmt					
<b>PROJECT AREA 7</b>												
<b>Alexandria Moraine</b>												
<i>Quistdorff, Regal Flats WMAs</i>	\$118,877			247			Additional activities: 3.5 miles bdry mgmt, 4 facilities devel					
<b>PROJECT AREA 8</b>												
<b>Big Woods - North</b>												
<i>Albion, Manannah, Prairie Heritage WMAs</i>	\$122,303			100			Additional activities: 4.2 miles bdry mgmt, 1 site/bldg cleanup, 2 facilities devel					
<b>PROJECT AREA 9</b>												
<b>Des Moines River Valley</b>												
<i>Expandere, Schindel, Timber Lake WMAs</i>	\$99,733			266			Additional activities: 6.5 miles bdry mgmt, 1 site/bdry cleanup, 2 facilities devel					
<b>PROJECT AREA 10</b>												
<b>Southern Lakes</b>												
<i>Save the Wetlands WMA</i>	\$17,369			25			Additional activities: 2.5 miles bdry mgmt, 1 facility devel					
<b>PROJECT AREA 11</b>												
<b>Mississippi Bluff Lands</b>												
<i>Chisholm Valley WMA</i>	\$9,234			0			Additional activities: 1.5 miles bdry mgmt, 1 facility devel					

2,545 acres

\$ - 0 0 \$ -

\$599,992 Project Areas

\$5,381 Expenditures in Central Office for salary and software for overall project

**\$605,373** Total expenditures