

2001 Project Abstract

For the Period Ending December 31, 2004

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TITLE: Campaign for Conservation – 4(g) and 2(m)
PROJECT MANAGER: Holly Buchanan
ORGANIZATION: The Nature Conservancy
ADDRESS: 1101 W. River Parkway, Suite 200, Minneapolis, MN 55415
WEB SITE ADDRESS: www.nature.org
FUND: Minnesota Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund
LEGAL CITATION: ML 2001, 1st Special Session, Ch. 2, Sec. 14, Subd. 4(e)

APPROPRIATION AMOUNT: \$1,000,000 – 4(g)
\$42,784 – 2(m)

Overall Project Outcome and Results

In Phase I of *Campaign for Conservation 4(g)*, the Conservancy proposed to acquire and restore 1,600 acres of high quality habitat in large contiguous blocks to supplement wildlife corridors. With our Phase I appropriation, the Conservancy succeeded in acquiring in fee title 1,145.5 acres of high quality habitat, and contributed LCMR funds toward the acquisition of a 148-acre conservation easement on forested lakeshore property, including a mile of undeveloped shoreline. In addition, we protected three properties totaling 1,535 acres in three of the Habitat Corridors project areas using \$909,000 in privately-raised funds.

The largest acquisition absorbing the majority of the Phase I funds was the 1,080-acre Thorson Prairie tract in Polk County. This acquisition strategically connects Conservancy-owned and DNR-owned lands, protecting a 3.5 mile long habitat corridor. Additional LCMR funds were invested into restoring the varied habitat on the property in preparation for transferring it to the DNR's Wildlife Management Area Program. In the first year of management, abandoned gravel pits were reclaimed and 100 acres of cropland were seeded to native prairie grasses.

Two small but important properties were acquired in the Lower St. Louis River project area. These parcels will be conveyed to the City of Duluth as additions to its Magney Snively Forest, the first designated natural area under the newly enacted Duluth Natural Areas Program.

As illustrative of the collaboration fostered through this partnership, a 148-acre conservation easement on a forested lakeshore church camp property was acquired using TNC's and two other partners' LCMR funds and will be held and managed under the DNR's Aquatic Management Area Program.

Under *Prairie Grassland Enhancement 2(m)*, over 500 acres of prairie in the existing protected lands system were enhanced during the first phase of the partnership through management techniques like prescribed burning, invasive species control, and brush removal.

Project Results Use and Dissemination

1. Brochures on the Habitat Corridors Partnership were developed and distributed to all the partners for wider distribution to their members and target audiences
2. Press releases were sent out to announce the completion of real estate transactions
3. All newly acquired property boundaries will be posted with Habitat Corridors Partnership signs

04e 4g
04e 2m

put in date of completion

LCMR Final Work Program Report

Date of Report: January 13, 2005

Project Completion Date: December 31, 2004

LCMR Work Program 2001

Title: Restoring Minnesota's Fish and Wildlife Habitat Corridors (CH-01):

Campaign for Conservation 4(g). Project Areas: 1-Aspen Parklands, 4-Central Lakes, 5-Lower St. Louis River, 7-Alexandria Moraine.

Prairie Grassland Enhancement 2(m). Project Areas: 1-Aspen Parklands and 3-Border Prairie.

Project Manager: Holly Buchanan
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Total Biennial Project Budget:

<u>Fund</u>	<u>Appropriation</u>	<u>Spent</u>	<u>Balance</u>
Restoring MN's Fish & Wildlife Habitat Corridors (CH-01)			
Campaign for Conservation 4(g)	\$ 1,000,000	\$999,809.32	\$190.68
Prairie Grassland Enhancement 2(m)	\$ 42,784	\$40,878.41	\$1905.59
Grand Total	\$1,042,784	\$1,040,687.73	\$2,096.27

Legal Citation:

M.L. 2001, 1st Special Session, Chapter 2, Section 14, Subd. 04(e) \$11,745,000 (Env. Trust Fund). Restoring Minnesota's Fish and Wildlife Habitat Corridors (CH-01) \$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. The 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.

Corridors – Campaign for Conservation and Prairie Grassland Enhancement

II. FINAL PROJECT SUMMARY:

In Phase I of *Campaign for Conservation 4(g)*, the Conservancy proposed to acquire and restore 1,600 acres of high quality habitat in large contiguous blocks to supplement wildlife corridors. With our Phase I appropriation, the Conservancy succeeded in acquiring in fee title 1,145.5 acres of high quality habitat, and contributed LCMR funds toward the acquisition of a 148-acre conservation easement on forested lakeshore property, including a mile of undeveloped shoreline. In addition, we protected three properties totaling 1,535 acres in three of the Habitat Corridors project areas using \$909,000 in privately-raised funds.

The largest acquisition absorbing the majority of the Phase I funds was the 1,080-acre Thorson Prairie tract in Polk County. This acquisition strategically connects Conservancy-owned and DNR-owned lands, protecting a 3.5 mile long habitat corridor. Additional LCMR funds were invested into restoring the varied habitat on the property in preparation for transferring it to the DNR's Wildlife Management Area Program. In the first year of management, abandoned gravel pits were reclaimed and 100 acres of cropland were seeded to native prairie grasses.

Two small but important properties were acquired in the Lower St. Louis River project area. These parcels will be conveyed to the City of Duluth as additions to its Magney Snively Forest, the first designated natural area under the newly enacted Duluth Natural Areas Program.

As illustrative of the collaboration fostered through this partnership, a 148-acre conservation easement on a forested lakeshore church camp property was acquired using TNC's and two other partners' LCMR funds and will be held and managed under the DNR's Aquatic Management Area Program.

Under *Prairie Grassland Enhancement 2(m)*, over 500 acres of prairie in the existing protected lands system were enhanced during the first phase of the partnership through management techniques like prescribed burning, invasive species control, and brush removal.

III. FINAL PROJECT SUMMARY

December 31, 2004

Grand total acres: 1,155.5

IV. FINAL PROJECT SUMMARY:

Result 1: 1-Aspen Parklands

Appropriation:	\$643,885
Balance:	\$190.68

The monies under this result were spent to acquire and restore the 1,080-acre Thorson Prairie tract in Polk County in northwestern Minnesota. The property contains a high quality 450-acre native prairie, which will be used in part as a seed source for nearby restoration projects. With this acquisition, a 3.5 mile wildlife corridor was protected between Conservancy-owned and DNR-owned lands.

Result 2: 5-Lower St. Louis River

Appropriation:	\$118,715
Balance:	\$0

The monies under this result were spent to acquire two important forested tracts which will be donated to the City of Duluth and incorporated into the Magney Snively Forest, the first municipal natural area designated under the newly created Duluth Natural Areas Program.

Result 3: 7-Alexandria Moraine

Appropriation:	\$0
Balance:	\$0
Other Funds:	\$550,000

No LCMR monies were spent under this result but TNC spent \$550,000 in privately raised funds to acquire a 440-acre tract located a mile to the southwest of the Conservancy's Ordway Prairie preserve.

Result 4: Professional services.

Appropriation:	\$47,000
Balance:	\$0

A portion of these funds was re-allocated to land acquisition to enable the Conservancy to contribute resources toward the acquisition of a conservation easement in the Central Lakes project area.

Result 5: 4-Central Lakes Acquisition.

Appropriation:	\$100,000
Balance:	\$0

The Conservancy contributed these monies to a collaborative project involving The Trust for Public Land, DNR Fisheries and a church camp to acquire a conservation easement on a 148-acre forested lakeshore property on Clearwater Lake in Crow Wing County. A mile of undeveloped lakeshore will be permanently protected by this easement.

2(m) Prairie Grassland Enhancement

Result 6: 1-Aspen Parklands and 3-Border Prairie Restoration.

Appropriation:	\$42,784
Balance:	\$1,905.59
Other Funds:	\$230,000

The monies were used to enhance over 500 acres of prairie in the existing protected lands systems through active management like prescribed burning, invasive species control, and brush removal. Additionally, in the Border Prairie project area TNC spent \$230,000 in privately-raised funds to acquire an 855-acre tract. This tract is adjacent to the Conservancy's flagship Bluestem Prairie preserve in Clay County, Minnesota.

V. TOTAL PROJECT BUDGET:

Campaign for Conservation 4(g)			
All Results:	Personnel:		\$47,000
All Results:	Equipment:		NA
All Results:	Acquisition:		\$862,600
All Results:	Restoration & Development		\$90,400
Prairie Grassland Enhancement 2(m)			
All Results:	Personnel:		\$32,784
All Results:	Equipment:		NA
All Results:	Acquisition:		NA
All Results:	Development:		NA
All Results:	Other:	Contracts	\$10,000
TOTAL BUDGET:			\$1,042,784

VI. PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE SPENDING

A. Past Spending:

Over the past three years, TNC expenditures for wildlife lands in Minnesota have averaged \$3 million and 5,700 acres. Late in 2000, TNC closed on 24,560 acres in Polk County. This property connects 11 WMA's, two SNA's, the Pembina Trail Preserve and three Waterfowl Production Areas. When restoration is completed, this will create an area of 32,000 acres of contiguous habitat and will become a National Wildlife Refuge. In addition, this property involves many of the same public and private partners.

B. Current and Future Spending:

During the time period of Phase I, TNC spent \$909,000 in private funds protecting properties in Habitat Corridors project areas 3, 6, and 7, to complement this project.

TNC acquired the 855-acre Fuch tract adjacent to the Conservancy's Bluestem Prairie preserve in Clay County in the Border Prairie project area. TNC acquired a 240-acre conservation easement on the Hanson tract situated in the center of the Conservancy's Plover Prairie preserve in Lac Qui Parle County in the Upper Minnesota River project area. In the Alexander Moraine project area, TNC acquired the 440-acre Nugent tract located in Pope County a mile to the southwest of the Conservancy's Ordway Prairie preserve.

C. Project Partners:

For Result 1: 1-Aspen Parklands – TPL, MN DNR, USFWS, NRCS
For Result 2: 5-Lower St. Louis River – City of Duluth
For Result 3: 7-Alexandria Moraine – MN DNR, USFWS, DU

For Result 5: 4-Central Lakes – TPL, MN DNR

For Result 6: 1-Aspen Parklands, 3-Border Prairie – MN DNR

Habitat Corridor Project partners are potential partners for each project area.

D. Time: Project will extend until December 31, 2004 to allow for sufficient time to complete acquisition of parcels.

VII. Dissemination

Land acquired for citizen access and habitat protection will be posted.

VIII. Location

All project activity will be conducted in project Areas 1, 3, 4, 5 and 7.

IX. Reporting requirements

Progress reports for this work program will be submitted on January 30, 2002, May 31, 2002, November 30, 2002, January 30, 2003, June 30, 2003, and November 30, 2003. The final work program report will be submitted by June 30, 2004, or by the completion date as set in the appropriation.

ATTACHMENT A

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

Project Number:

Campaign for Conservation 4(g) \$100,000
 Prairie Grassland Enhancement 2(m) \$42,784

LCMR Recommended \$1,042,784

Attachment A Deliverable Products and Related Budget - LCMR
 Funds Only

2001 LCMR Project Biennial Budget																			
Budget Item (Title of Result)		OBJECTIVE - RESULT															PROJECT TOTALS:		
		Result 1 Budget	Result 1 Amount Spent*	Result 1 Balance	Result 2 Budget	Result 2 Amount Spent**	Result 2 Balance	Result 4 Budget	Result 4 Amount Spent	Result 4 Balance	Result 5 Budget	Result 5 Amount Spent	Result 5 Balance	Result 6 Budget	Result 6 Amount Spent	Result 6 Balance	BUDGET	AMOUNT SPENT	BALANCE
		Aspen Parklands			Lower St. Louis River		Professional Services				Central Lakes			Aspen Parklands and Border Prairie					
Land acquisition	4(g)	\$643,885.00	\$643,885.00	\$0.00	\$118,283.50	\$118,283.50	\$0.00				\$100,000.00	\$100,000.00	\$0.00				\$862,168.50	\$862,168.50	\$0.00
Acquisition Restoration & Development	4(g)	\$98,310.38	\$98,119.70	\$190.68													\$98,310.38	\$98,119.70	\$190.68
Wages, salaries & benefits – temporary real estate staff	4(g)						\$39,521.12	\$39,521.12	\$0.00					\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$39,521.12	\$39,521.12	\$0.00
Restoration of Prairie Grasslands- Wages, salary & benefits, &/or contracts	2(m)													\$42,784.00	\$40,878.41	\$1,905.59	\$42,784.00	\$40,878.41	\$1,905.59
COLUMN TOTAL		\$742,195.38	\$742,004.70	\$190.68	\$118,283.50	\$118,283.50	\$0.00	\$39,521.12	\$39,521.12	\$0.00	\$100,000.00	\$100,000.00	\$0.00	\$42,784.00	\$40,878.41	\$1,905.59	\$1,042,784.00	\$1,040,687.73	\$2,096.27

* includes cost of acquisition and \$1,285 in closing costs

** includes \$685 in closing costs and \$155 environmental hazard assesment cost

Result 3 columns were hidden to compress table. There is no data under Result 3.

**Attachment B -- Habitat Corridors Partnership PHASE I -- Individual Work Program Summary
Final Report for All Completed Activities thru 12/31/04**

Activity	Partner	LCMR Allocation	LCMR Expenditure	LCMR Balance	Proposed Accomplishments				Current LCMR Accomplishments							
					LCMR Acres	LCMR Miles/ Shoreline	LCMR Lakes Restored	LCMR Acres*	LCMR Miles/ Shoreline	LCMR Lakes Restored	Other Funds Committed	Other Funds Expenditure	Other Funds Balance	Other Funds Acres (fee)	Other Funds Easement	Funds Lakes Restored
4(g) Campaign for Conservation	The Nature Conservancy	\$ 1,000,000.00	\$ 999,809.32	\$ 190.68	1,600			1,155.5			\$ 667,000.00	\$ 919,424.00			1,295	240
2(m) Prairie Grassland Enhancement	The Nature Conservancy	\$ 42,784.00	\$ 40,878.41	\$ 1,905.59	500			500.0								
Total		\$ 1,042,784.00	\$ 1,040,687.73	\$ 2,096.27	2,100			1,655.5			\$ 667,000.00	\$ 919,424.00			1,295	240

*over 500 acres of grassland/wetlands in the existing public lands systems were received management like prescribed fire or brush removal. The actual acreage that was burned in the spring and summer of 2004 was 5,489 ac.

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

Final Report for All Completed Activities thru 12/31/04

Work Program: Partner:	LCMR Funds						Other Funds					
	LCMR Dollars Expended ¹	Acquisition Acres	Easement Acres	Restoration Acres ²	Shore Miles	Misc.	Other Funds Expended	Acquisition Acres	Easement Acres	Restoration Acres	Shore Miles	Misc. ³
PROJECT AREA 1												
Aspen Parklands	\$ 782,883.11	1080.0		5,453								
PROJECT AREA 2												
Mississippi Headwaters												
PROJECT AREA 3												
Border Prairie				36			\$ 230,000.00	855				6,076
PROJECT AREA 4												
Central Lakes	\$ 100,000.00		10									
PROJECT AREA 5												
Lower St. Louis River	\$ 118,283.50	65.5										
PROJECT AREA 6												
Upper Minnesota River							\$ 129,000.00		240			2,778
PROJECT AREA 7												
Alexandria Moraine							\$ 550,000.00	440				1,570
PROJECT AREA 8												
Big Woods - North												
PROJECT AREA 9												
Des Moines River Valley												
PROJECT AREA 10												
Southern Lakes												
PROJECT AREA 11												
Mississippi Bluff Lands												
	\$ 1,001,166.61	1145.5	10.0	5,489			\$ 909,000.00	1,295	240			\$ 10,424.00
							\$ 919,424.00					

1) the difference of \$39,521.12 from the total expenditure is in professional services for Realty Specialist and is not attributable to any one project area.

2) the acreage reported as 'restored' would be more accurately described as acreage 'enhanced' through prescribed burns. Also, burn crews worked in both project areas 1 and 3, not easy to determine exact crew cost for the 36 acres in project area 3.

3) includes associated closing costs (property taxes, title insurance, appraisal, environmental assessment, etc.)