

## M.L. 2011 Projects

### M.L. 2011 Projects

#### MN Laws 2011, 1st Special Session, Chapter 2, Article 3, Section 2 (beginning July 1, 2011)

For Minnesota's FY 2012-13 biennium (July 1, 2011 - June 30, 2013), approximately \$25.3 million was available each year (Total = \$50,656,000) for funding from the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund and a total of \$750,000 from the Land and Water Conservation Account (LAWCON). In response to the 2011-12 Request for Proposal (RFP) due April 9, 2010, 241 proposals requesting a total of approximately \$163.8 million were received. After full consideration of all proposals received through a competitive, multi-step process, on 07/14/10 the LCCMR selected 92 projects to be included in 87 appropriation recommendations to the 2011 Minnesota Legislature. The Legislature adopted 61 of the recommendations, including 52 without any changes and 9 at a decreased or increased dollar amount; dropped 26 of the recommendations; and added 8 additional appropriations for a total of 69 total appropriations. All 69 appropriations were signed into law the Governor on 07/20/11.

NOTE: Below are short descriptions for projects funded during the 2011 Legislative Session. For all projects, contact the LCCMR office to obtain the most up-to-date work plans for current projects (project updates are required twice each year) or the final reports of completed projects.

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#### Subd. 03 Natural Resource Data and Information

- 03a Minnesota County Biological Survey
- 03b County Geologic Atlases for Sustainable Water Management
- 03c Completion of Statewide Digital Soil Survey
- 03d Updating National Wetland Inventory for Minnesota - Phase III
- 03e Golden Eagle Survey
- 03f Determining Causes of Mortality in Moose Populations - RESEARCH
- 03g Prairie Management for Wildlife and Bioenergy - Phase II - RESEARCH
- 03h Evaluation of Biomass Harvesting Impacts on Minnesota's Forests - RESEARCH
- 03i Change and Resilience in Boreal Forests in Northern Minnesota - RESEARCH
- 03j Information System for Wildlife and Aquatic Management Areas
- 03k Strengthening Natural Resource Management with LiDAR Training
- 03l Measuring Conservation Practice Outcomes
- 03m Conservation-Based Approach for Assessing Public Drainage Benefits
- 03n Mississippi River Central Minnesota Conservation Planning
- 03o Saint Croix Basin Conservation Planning and Protection
- 03p Species of Concern; Investigations - RESEARCH

#### Subd. 04 Land, Habitat, and Recreation

- 04a State Park and Recreation Area Operations and Improvements
- 04b State Parks and Trails Land Acquisition
- 04c Metropolitan Regional Park System Acquisition
- 04d Regional Park, Trail, and Connections Acquisition and Development Grants
- 04e Scientific and Natural Areas Acquisition and Restoration
- 04f LaSalle Lake State Recreation Area Acquisition
- 04g Minnesota River Valley Green Corridor Scientific and Natural Area Acquisition
- 04h Native Prairie Stewardship and Native Prairie Bank Acquisition
- 04i Metropolitan Conservation Corridors (MeCC) - Phase VI
- 04j Habitat Conservation Partnership (HCP) - Phase VII

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- 04k Natural and Scenic Area Acquisition Grants
- 04l Acceleration of Minnesota Conservation Assistance
- 04m Conservation Easement Stewardship and Enforcement Program - Phase II
- 04n Recovery of At-Risk Native Prairie Species
- 04o Understanding Threats, Genetic Diversity, and Conservation Options for Wild Rice - RESEARCH
- 04p Southeast Minnesota Stream Restoration
- 04q Restoration Strategies for Ditched Peatland and Scientific and Natural Areas - RESEARCH
- 04r Northeast Minnesota White Cedar Plant Community Restoration
- 04s Land and Water Conservation Account (LAWCON) Federal Reimbursement

### **Subd. 05 Water Resources**

- 05a Itasca County Sensitive Lakeshore Identification
- 05b Trout Stream Springshed Mapping in Southeast Minnesota - Phase III
- 05c Mississippi River Water Quality Assessment - RESEARCH
- 05d Zumbro River Watershed Restoration Prioritization
- 05e Assessment of Minnesota River Antibiotic Concentrations - RESEARCH

### **Subd. 06 Aquatic and Terrestrial Invasive Species**

- 06a Improved Detection of Harmful Microbes in Ballast Water - RESEARCH
- 06b Emerald Ash Borer Biocontrol Research and Implementation - RESEARCH
- 06c Evaluation of Switchgrass as Biofuel Crop - RESEARCH

### **Subd. 07 Renewable Energy and Air Quality**

- 07 Supporting Community-Driven Sustainable Bioenergy Projects

### **Subd. 08 Environmental Education**

- 08a Youth-Led Renewable Energy and Energy Conservation in West and Southwest Minnesota
- 08b Minnesota Junior Master Naturalist Program
- 08c Experiential Environmental Education for Urban Youth

### **Subd. 09 Emerging Issues**

- 09a Minnesota Conservation Apprentice Academy
- 09b Chronic Wasting Disease and Animal Health
- 09c Aquatic Invasive Species
- 09d Reinvest in Minnesota Wetlands Reserve Acquisition and Restoration Program Partnership

### **Subd. 10 Administration and Contract Management**

- 10a Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources (LCCMR)
- 10b Contract Administration
- 10c LCC Web Site

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## **SUBD. 03 NATURAL RESOURCE DATA AND INFORMATION**

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### **Minnesota County Biological Survey**

- Subd. 03a \$2,250,000 TF

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### Appropriation Language

\$1,125,000 the first year and \$1,125,000 the second year are from the trust fund to the commissioner of natural resources for continuation of the Minnesota county biological survey to provide a foundation for conserving biological diversity by systematically collecting, interpreting, and delivering data on plant and animal distribution and ecology, native plant communities, and functional landscapes.

### Project Overview

The Minnesota County Biological Survey (MCBS) is an ongoing effort begun in 1987 by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) that is systematically surveying, county-by-county, the state's natural habitats. The effort identifies significant natural areas and collects and interprets data on the status, distribution, and ecology of plants, animals, and native plant communities throughout the state. Through July 2011, surveys have been completed in 81 of Minnesota's 87 counties and have added more than 19,000 new records of rare features to the DNR's information systems. MCBS data is used by all levels of government in natural resource planning and use decisions, including prioritization of protection of park lands and scientific and natural areas. This appropriation will permit continuation of the survey in Lake, St. Louis, Clearwater, and Beltrami counties and begin initial surveying in Koochiching and Lake of the Woods counties. Additionally one book will be published: a natural history guidebook of the Aspen Parkland-Red River Valley region of MN.

**Project due to be completed:** 6/30/2013

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### County Geologic Atlases for Sustainable Water Management

Subd. 03b \$1,800,000 TF

#### Part 1 (\$1,200,000)

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#### Part 2 (\$600,000)

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### Appropriation Language

\$900,000 the first year and \$900,000 the second year are from the trust fund to accelerate the production of county geologic atlases to provide information essential to sustainable management of ground water resources by defining aquifer boundaries and the connection of aquifers to the land surface and surface water resources. Of this appropriation, \$600,000 each year is to the Board of Regents of the University of Minnesota for the Geologic Survey and \$300,000 each year is to the commissioner of natural resources. This appropriation is available until June 30, 2015, by which time the project must be completed and final products delivered.

### Project Overview

The Minnesota County Geologic Atlas program is an ongoing effort begun in 1982 that is being conducted jointly by the University of Minnesota's Minnesota Geological Survey and the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR). The program collects information on the geology of Minnesota to create maps and reports depicting the characteristics and pollution sensitivity of Minnesota's ground-water resources and their interaction with surface waters. The information from County Geologic Atlases is used in planning and environmental protection efforts at all levels of government, by businesses, and by homeowners to ensure sound and sustainable planning, management, and protection of water resources used for drinking, agriculture, industry, and more. This appropriation will:

- Support completion of geologic atlases for Carlton, McLeod, Carver, Benton, and Chisago counties.
- Support ongoing work on geologic atlases for Anoka, Blue Earth, Clay, Nicollet, Renville, Sibley, and Wright counties;
- Initiate geologic atlases for three or more additional counties;
- Make collected data available in a digital format.

**Project due to be completed:** 6/30/2015

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### Completion of Statewide Digital Soil Survey

Subd. 03c \$500,000 TF

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### Appropriation Language

\$250,000 the first year and \$250,000 the second year are from the trust fund to the Board of Water and

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Soil Resources to accelerate the completion of county soil survey mapping and Web-based data delivery. The soil surveys must be done on a cost-share basis with local and federal funds.

### Project Overview

The Minnesota Soil Survey is an ongoing effort by the Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) that is systematically collecting and mapping data pertaining to soil types and other soil properties in each county of the state. To date, surveys for nearly all counties in the state have been completed. Soils data is used by governments, farmers, and other businesses for a number of purposes from protection and restoration of soil, water, wetlands, and habitats to agricultural productivity and soil management to building construction. This appropriation will complete the mapping and digitization of soil surveys for Crow Wing, Koochiching, Lake, Cook, and Saint Louis counties.

**Project due to be completed:** 6/30/2013

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### Updating National Wetland Inventory for Minnesota - Phase III

Subd. 03d \$1,500,000 TF

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#### Appropriation Language

\$1,500,000 the second year is from the trust fund to the commissioner of natural resources to continue the update of wetland inventory maps for Minnesota. This appropriation is available until June 30, 2015, by which time the project must be completed and final products delivered.

### Project Overview

The National Wetland Inventory, a program initiated in the 1970s, is an important tool used at all levels of government and by private industry, non-profit organizations, and private landowners for wetland regulation and management, land management and conservation planning, environmental impact assessment, and natural resource inventories. The data behind the National Wetlands Inventory for Minnesota is now considerably out-of-date and a multi-phase, multi-agency collaborative effort coordinated by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources is underway to update the data for the whole state. This appropriation is being used to conduct the third phase of this effort, which involves updating wetland maps for 30 counties in southern Minnesota and acquiring additional data needed to update wetland maps for an additional 22 counties in central Minnesota during a future phase of the inventory.

**Project due to be completed:** 6/30/2015

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### Golden Eagle Survey

Subd. 03e \$60,000 TF

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#### Appropriation Language

\$30,000 the first year and \$30,000 the second year are from the trust fund to the commissioner of natural resources for an agreement with the National Eagle Center to increase the understanding of golden eagles in Minnesota through surveys and education. This appropriation is available until June 30, 2014, by which time the project must be completed and final products delivered.

#### Project Overview

Not previously thought to be regular inhabitants of Minnesota, in recent years there have been reports of golden eagle sightings in most counties of the state, while recent surveys suggest there is now a regular wintering population in the blufflands of southeast Minnesota. This appropriation is being used to better understand the numbers, distribution, migration routes, and habitat needs of golden eagles in Minnesota. This information will inform natural resource management decisions and be used to educate landowners and the general public about golden eagles in the state.

**Project due to be completed:** 6/30/2014

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### Determining Causes of Mortality in Moose Populations

Subd. 03f \$600,000 TF

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## RESEARCH

#### Appropriation Language

\$300,000 the first year and \$300,000 the second year are from the trust fund to the commissioner of natural resources to determine specific causes of moose mortality and population decline in Minnesota and to develop specific management actions to prevent further population decline. This appropriation is available until June 30, 2014, by which time the project must be completed and final products delivered.

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### Project Overview

Moose, one of Minnesota's prized wildlife species, are dying at much higher rates in Minnesota than elsewhere in North America. Recently observed increases in mortality rates amongst some moose in northeastern Minnesota have led to concern that the population there may be starting a decline like that seen in the northwestern part of the state, where moose populations fell from over 4,000 to fewer than 100 in less than 20 years. Additionally the specific causes of increased mortality amongst individual moose, such as potential nutritional factors, remain unknown. Scientists at the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources are using this appropriation to investigate the actual cause of death in recovered individual moose and determine what other factors may also be contributing. Once these causes of death and contributing factors are identified, it may be possible to implement management actions to address the overall population decline and help maintain healthy populations of moose in the state.

**Project due to be completed:** 6/30/2014

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### Prairie Management for Wildlife and Bioenergy - Phase II

Subd. 03g \$600,000 TF

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### RESEARCH

#### Appropriation Language

\$300,000 the first year and \$300,000 the second year are from the trust fund to the Board of Regents of the University of Minnesota to research and evaluate methods of managing diverse working prairies for wildlife and renewable bioenergy production. This appropriation is available until June 30, 2014, by which time the project must be completed and final products delivered.

### Project Overview

Bioenergy, a form of renewable energy derived from biological sources such as wood or grasses, is becoming an important component of the energy production mix. As the demand for bioenergy feedstocks increases in Minnesota and elsewhere, land use changes could impact wildlife. However, with proper management strategies it is possible that bioenergy production could actually improve conditions for wildlife rather than make them worse. This appropriation is allowing scientists at the University of Minnesota to continue developing best management practices for working prairies that maximize biomass harvesting while also promoting wildlife conservation and associated habitat diversity. This project is part of a broad effort at the University aimed at figuring out how to sustain Minnesota resources while improving the rural economy and developing energy independence.

**Project due to be completed:** 6/30/2014

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## M.L. 2011 Projects

### Evaluation of Biomass Harvesting Impacts on Minnesota's Forests

Subd. 03h \$350,000 TF

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#### RESEARCH

##### Appropriation Language

\$175,000 the first year and \$175,000 the second year are from the trust fund to the Board of Regents of the University of Minnesota to assess the impacts biomass harvests for energy have on soil nutrients, native forest vegetation, invasive species spread, and long-term tree productivity within Minnesota's forests. This appropriation is available until June 30, 2014, by which time the project must be completed and final products delivered.

##### Project Overview

Minnesota's forests are currently being viewed as potential feedstocks for the production of renewable energy. A primary concern about harvesting forest biomass to generate renewable energy is the long-term impacts these harvests will have on soil nutrients and long-term ecosystem production, such as forest growth, carbon storage, and wildlife habitat. With this appropriation, scientists at the University of Minnesota's Department of Forest Resources are evaluating the ecological impacts of forest biomass harvesting in northern Minnesota. Results from this effort will be used by the energy industry and forestry professionals in both the public and private sector to guide long-term management that maximizes harvesting without negatively impacting forest productivity and ecological integrity.

**Project due to be completed:** 6/30/2014

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### Change and Resilience in Boreal Forests in Northern Minnesota

Subd. 03i \$150,000 TF

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#### RESEARCH

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### Appropriation Language

\$75,000 the first year and \$75,000 the second year are from the trust fund to the Board of Regents of the University of Minnesota to assess the potential response of northern Minnesota's boreal forests to observed and predicted changes in climate conditions and develop related management guidelines and adaptation strategies. This appropriation is available until June 30, 2014, by which time the project must be completed and final products delivered.

### Project Overview

Boreal forests of spruce, fir, paper birch, aspen, and jack pine cover more than two million acres of northern Minnesota, including the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness. These forests are near the southern edge of their geographic range. With a warmer climate the health and productivity of these forests may be jeopardized by increased stresses such as heat, drought, fires, storms, and insect pests resulting in a much different forest ecosystem for northern Minnesota in the future. Scientists at the University of Minnesota's Department of Forest Resources are using this appropriation to evaluate how these forests are poised to respond to these changes and obtain the necessary data to guide forest management and planning efforts, such as determining practices that will help fend off threats from invasive species.

**Project due to be completed:** 6/30/2014

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### Information System for Wildlife and Aquatic Management Areas

Subd. 03j \$500,000 TF

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### Appropriation Language

\$250,000 the first year and \$250,000 the second year are from the trust fund to the commissioner of natural resources to develop an information system to facilitate improved management of wildlife and fish habitat and facilities. This appropriation is available until June 30, 2014, by which time the project must be completed and final products delivered.

### Project Overview

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) manages over 2,135 state Wildlife Management Areas (WMA) and Aquatic Management Areas (AMA) containing over 1.3 million acres. This appropriation is enabling the DNR to develop an information system that will better facilitate the management of the state's WMAs and AMAs by helping to identify needs; prioritize, plan, and carry out related activities; track and assess results of activities; and make the information available to resource management professionals and the public.

**Project due to be completed:** 6/30/2014

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### **Strengthening Natural Resource Management with LiDAR Training**

Subd. 03k \$180,000 TF

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#### **Appropriation Language**

\$90,000 the first year and \$90,000 the second year are from the trust fund to the Board of Regents of the University of Minnesota to provide workshops and Web-based training and information on the use of LiDAR elevation data in planning for and managing natural resources.

#### **Project Overview**

The State of Minnesota is using an optical remote sensing technology called LiDAR (Light Detection and Ranging) to procure high resolution digital elevation data for the entire state. Precision, efficacy, and cost efficiency of numerous types of natural resource management activities can be greatly enhanced by use of this data. Potential users include natural resource professionals at all levels of government and in the private sector. However, most potential users have not yet had experience using this type of data because it's a relatively new technology. Through this appropriation the University of Minnesota's Water Resources Center is developing and implementing a training program that will enable natural resource professionals throughout the state to effectively employ this data in a variety of different applications in natural resource evaluation, management, and protection.

**Project due to be completed:** 6/30/2013

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### **Measuring Conservation Practice Outcomes**

Subd. 03I \$340,000 TF

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#### **Appropriation Language**

\$170,000 the first year and \$170,000 the second year are from the trust fund to the Board of Water and Soil Resources to improve measurement of impacts of conservation practices through refinement of

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existing and development of new pollution estimators and by providing local government training.

### Project Overview

Accounting for on the ground outcomes and measurable environmental benefits (e.g., pollution reduction) to the quality of soil, water, and habitat is an essential component of implementing conservation practices. Natural resource professionals use models and "estimators" to quantify these outcomes and benefits and guide future efforts. Over time, as conditions change and new information becomes available, estimators need to be revised or added to ensure outcomes and benefits are being accurately quantified. This appropriation is enabling the Minnesota Board of Soil and Water Resources to revise and create new estimators where needed, field verify the revised and new estimators, and provide local governments and other conservation professionals with training on how to use the revised and new estimators.

**Project due to be completed:** 6/30/2013

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### Conservation-Based Approach for Assessing Public Drainage Benefits

Subd. 03m \$150,000 TF

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#### Appropriation Language

\$75,000 the first year and \$75,000 the second year are from the trust fund to the Board of Water and Soil Resources to develop an alternative framework to assess drainage benefits on public systems to enhance water conservation. This appropriation is available until June 30, 2014, by which time the project must be completed and final products delivered.

### Project Overview

Artificial drainage exists in more than 25% of Minnesota. Runoff contributions from drained lands into these drainage systems contribute pollutants and degrade downstream water quality. Public drainage systems are funded by assessing costs to the lands benefitting from the systems. The current framework upon which these assessments are determined is based on maximizing crop production and does not account for overall water resources impacts, so there is no incentive for landowners to implement conservation practices that reduce runoff contributions to the drainage systems. The Minnesota Board of Soil and Water Resources is using this appropriation to develop and test an alternative framework for funding public drainage systems that would reduce costs to landowners if they implement conservation strategies that promote infiltration and reduce runoff.

**Project due to be completed:** 6/30/2014

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### **Mississippi River Central Minnesota Conservation Planning**

Subd. 03n \$175,000 TF

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#### **Appropriation Language**

\$87,000 the first year and \$88,000 the second year are from the trust fund to the commissioner of natural resources for an agreement with Stearns County Soil and Water Conservation District to develop and adopt river protection strategies in cooperation with local jurisdictions in the communities of the 26 miles of the Mississippi River between Benton and Stearns Counties. This appropriation must be matched by \$175,000 of nonstate cash or qualifying in-kind funds.

#### **Project Overview**

From its headwaters to the Twin Cities, the Mississippi River has benefited from coordinated management plans and community efforts to protect its water quality and shoreland habitat - except for a 26-mile stretch in central Minnesota. Starting in St. Cloud and stretching north through Stearns and Benton counties, the stretch is governed by 11 different jurisdictions and the communities have no uniform land use controls to protect this shared resource despite population growth and development pressure threatening the health of the river. Stearns County Soil and Water Conservation District is using this appropriation to coordinate an effort between these 11 different local governments to develop and implement specific river protection policies and work with landowners along the river to implement shoreland management practices. Ultimately the effort aims to protect the water quality of the Mississippi River, reduce habitat fragmentation, and prioritize on-the-ground efforts.

**Project due to be completed:** 6/30/2013

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### **St. Croix Basin Conservation Planning and Protection**

Subd. 03o \$175,000 TF

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#### **Appropriation Language**

\$60,000 the first year and \$60,000 the second year are from the trust fund to the commissioner of natural resources for an agreement with the St. Croix River Association to develop an interagency plan to identify and prioritize critical areas for project implementation to improve watershed health. This

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appropriation must be matched by \$120,000 of nonstate cash or qualifying in-kind funds. Up to \$10,000 may be retained by the Department of Natural Resources at the request of the St. Croix River Association to provide technical and mapping assistance. This appropriation is available until June 30, 2014, by which time the project must be completed and final products delivered.

### Project Overview

Portions of the St. Croix River Basin are now on the impaired waters list and rare landscapes, plants, and animal communities are increasingly threatened by development pressures. Up until now, conservation efforts in the St. Croix Basin have often been lacking focus and coordination between jurisdictions has been inadequate. Through this appropriation, the St. Croix River Association is establishing and coordinating a partnership effort between local, state, and federal government units and non-profits to develop a joint plan that will identify and prioritize areas for conservation implementation and guide efforts over time to improve overall watershed health in the St. Croix Basin.

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### Species of Concern; Investigations

Subd. 03p \$500,000 TF

#### Part A: Minnesota Common Loons and American White Pelicans (\$250,000)

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### RESEARCH

#### Part B: Minnesota Breeding Bird Atlas (\$250,000)

TBD

### Appropriation Language

\$500,000 the first year is from the trust fund to the commissioner of natural resources for investigating species of concern.

#### Part A: Minnesota Common Loons and American White Pelicans - Project Overview

Over a three month period in 2010, approximately five million barrels of oil was spilled into the Gulf of Mexico causing extensive damage to marine and wildlife habitats and resulting in significant losses in fish and wildlife populations. A number of Minnesota's migratory bird species spend parts of their lives in the areas impacted by the spill and impacts on their populations in the state could become evident over time. Impacts could result from immediate losses of birds that were present at the time of the spill or from cumulative negative effects resulting from contamination of the food chain by petroleum chemicals and the dispersants used on the oil. The two Minnesota species that are potentially most vulnerable are the common loon and the American white pelican - some of their young would have been

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present in the Gulf at the time of the spill and their behavior and feeding patterns put them at greater risk of exposure to chemicals from the spill persisting in the environment. The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources is using this appropriation to determine whether or not common loon or American white pelican populations in Minnesota have been impacted by the Gulf oil spill. Besides population declines in the two species, other impacts that could occur as a result of chemical contamination in the food chain include changes in behavior, migratory abilities, reproductive success, or longevity. If a link is documented Minnesota may be eligible for remediation funds from the Federal Natural Resource Damage Assessment (NRDA) process currently underway, and those funds could be used to help restore the populations of these two species.

### **Part B: Minnesota Breeding Bird Atlas - Project Overview**

A state Breeding Bird Atlas is a comprehensive systematic field survey of the occurrence, distribution, diversity, and breeding status of bird species within the state. Atlases are used to set conservation priorities, develop conservation plans, and guide habitat protection and restoration efforts. Minnesota is one of only seven states in the country that has yet to complete a Breeding Bird Atlas. Audubon Minnesota will use this appropriation to complete the Minnesota Breeding Bird Atlas and create related publications, including a book and online atlas with distribution maps, breeding status, and historical species information.

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## **SUBD. 04 LAND, HABITAT, AND RECREATION**

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### **State Park and Recreation Area Operations and Improvements**

Subd. 04a \$3,627,000 TF

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**Web:** [http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/state\\_parks/](http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/state_parks/)

#### **Appropriation Language**

\$1,877,000 the first year and \$1,750,000 the second year are from the trust fund to the commissioner of natural resources for state park and recreation area operations and improvements, including activities directly related to and necessary for this appropriation. This appropriation is not subject to Minnesota Statutes, sections 116P.05, subdivision 2, paragraph (b), and 116P.09, subdivision 4.

#### **Project Overview**

Minnesota's extensive state park and recreation area system, the second oldest in the country, is currently comprised of a total of 76 state parks and recreation areas scattered throughout the state. The state park system provides abundant recreational and educational opportunities for citizens while also preserving some of the state's most valued natural, scenic, and cultural resources. The Minnesota

## M.L. 2011 Projects

Department of Natural Resources is utilizing the appropriation to accelerate natural and cultural resource management in the parks through activities including invasive species control, habitat restoration and enhancement, and natural resource inventory and monitoring to ensure desired outcomes are being achieved.

**Project due to be completed: 6/30/2013**

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### State Parks and Trails Land Acquisition

Subd. 04b \$3,000,000 TF

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#### Appropriation Language

\$1,500,000 the first year and \$1,500,000 the second year are from the trust fund to the commissioner of natural resources to acquire state trails and critical parcels within the statutory boundaries of state parks. State park land acquired with this appropriation must be sufficiently improved to meet at least minimum management standards, as determined by the commissioner of natural resources. A list of proposed acquisitions must be provided as part of the required work program. This appropriation is available until June 30, 2014, by which time the project must be completed and final products delivered.

#### Project Overview

Privately owned lands exist within the designated boundaries of state parks throughout Minnesota. Purchase of these lands from willing landowners for addition to the state park system makes them permanently available for public recreation and enjoyment and facilitates more efficient management. Additional benefits include preserving contiguous wildlife corridors, facilitating preservation and restoration of native plant communities and cultural resources, reducing impacts of future development, and providing riparian buffers along wetlands, creeks, and lakes. The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources is using this appropriation to partially fund the acquisition of approximately 120 acres, which includes:

- 64 acres for 6.5 miles of the Brown's Creek Segment of the Willard Munger State Trail in Washington County
- 75 acres for Mille Lacs Kathio State Park in Mille Lacs County
- 3 acres for Crow Wing State Park in Cass County
- 48 acres for Tettegouche State Park in Lake County
- 20 acres for Nerstrand Big Woods State Park in Rice County

**Project due to be completed: 6/30/2014**

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## M.L. 2011 Projects

### Metropolitan Regional Park System Acquisition

Subd. 04c \$2,250,000 TF

#### Arne Stefferud

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#### Appropriation Language

\$1,125,000 the first year and \$1,125,000 the second year are from the trust fund to the Metropolitan Council for grants for the acquisition of lands within the approved park unit boundaries of the metropolitan regional park system. This appropriation may not be used for the purchase of residential structures. A list of proposed fee title and easement acquisitions must be provided as part of the required work program. This appropriation must be matched by at least 40 percent of nonstate money and must be committed by December 31, 2011, or the appropriation cancels. This appropriation is available until June 30, 2014, at which time the project must be completed and final products delivered, unless an earlier date is specified in the work program.

#### Project Overview

The Twin Cities area is host to a nationally renowned system of regional parks that provides numerous outdoor recreational opportunities for the public while preserving green space for wildlife habitat and other natural resource benefits. Through an existing grant program, the Metropolitan Council is using this appropriation to partner with local metropolitan communities to partially finance the acquisition of approximately 210 acres to be added to existing metropolitan regional parks. Priority will be given to lands with shoreland, lands that provide important natural resource connections, and lands containing unique natural resources.

**Project due to be completed:** 6/30/2014

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### Regional Park, Trail, and Connections Acquisition and Development Grants

Subd. 04d \$2,000,000 TF

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#### Appropriation Language

\$1,000,000 the first year and \$1,000,000 the second year are from the trust fund to the commissioner of

## M.L. 2011 Projects

natural resources to provide matching grants to local units of government for acquisition and development of regional parks, regional trails, and trail connections. The local match required for a grant to acquire a regional park or regional outdoor recreation area is two dollars of nonstate money for each three dollars of state money. This appropriation is available until June 30, 2014, by which time the project must be completed and final products delivered.

### Project Overview

A vast network of locally managed parks and trails of regional or statewide significance exist outside the seven county Metropolitan area providing outdoor recreational opportunities for the public while preserving green space for wildlife habitat and other natural resource benefits. Through an existing grant program, the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources is using this appropriation to partner with local communities around the state to partially finance the acquisition and/or development of approximately 550 acres for new or expanded regional parks, regional trails, or trail connections outside the seven county Metro area.

**Project due to be completed:** 6/30/2014

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### Scientific and Natural Areas Acquisition and Restoration

Subd. 04e \$1,640,000 TF

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#### Appropriation Language

\$820,000 the first year and \$820,000 the second year are from the trust fund to the commissioner of natural resources to acquire lands with high-quality native plant communities and rare features to be established as scientific and natural areas as provided in Minnesota Statutes, section 86A.05, subdivision 5, restore parts of scientific and natural areas, and provide technical assistance and outreach. A list of proposed acquisitions must be provided as part of the required work program. Land acquired with this appropriation must be sufficiently improved to meet at least minimum management standards, as determined by the commissioner of natural resources. This appropriation is available until June 30, 2014, by which time the project must be completed and final products delivered.

#### Project Overview

Minnesota's Scientific and Natural Areas (SNA) Program is an effort to preserve and perpetuate the state's ecological diversity and ensure that no single rare feature is lost from any region of the state. This includes landforms, fossil remains, plant and animal communities, rare and endangered species, and other unique biotic or geological features. These sites play an important role in scientific study, public education, and outdoor recreation. The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources is using this appropriation to conduct restoration activities on approximately 1,800 acres in existing SNAs, to acquire an additional 80 acres to be added to the SNA system, and to increase citizen and student knowledge

## M.L. 2011 Projects

and skills pertaining to ecological restoration and biodiversity conservation through engagement with SNAs.

**Project due to be completed:** 6/30/2014

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### **LaSalle Lake State Recreation Area Acquisition**

Subd. 04f \$2,000,000 TF

#### **Susan Schmidt**

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#### **Appropriation Language**

\$1,000,000 the first year and \$1,000,000 the second year are from the trust fund to the commissioner of natural resources for an agreement with The Trust for Public Land to acquire approximately 190 acres to be designated as a state recreation area as provided in Minnesota Statutes, section 86A.05, subdivision 3, on LaSalle Lake adjacent to the upper Mississippi River. If this acquisition is not completed by July 15, 2012, then the appropriation is available to the Department of Natural Resources for other state park and recreation area acquisitions on the priority list. Up to \$10,000 may be retained by the Department of Natural Resources at the request of The Trust for Public Land for transaction costs, associated professional services, and restoration needs.

#### **Project Overview**

LaSalle Lake, a 211 acre lake in northwestern Hubbard County, is the second deepest lake in the state at 213 feet. It is surrounded by thousands of acres of natural areas that include rare species, high-quality forest and wetlands, coldwater stream, and portions of the Upper Mississippi River. In partnership with the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, the Trust for Public Land is coordinating a multi-phase effort to permanently protect a total of 980 acres surrounding LaSalle Lake for the creation of LaSalle State Recreation Area, making the area available for public enjoyment for generations to come. This appropriation is being used to purchase a 190 acre portion of the total acreage that includes some of the highest quality habitat and biodiversity as identified by the Minnesota County Biological Survey.

**Project due to be completed:** 6/30/2013

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### **Minnesota River Valley Green Corridor Scientific and Natural Area Acquisition**

Subd. 04g \$2,000,000 TF

#### **Brad Cobb**

Green Corridor Inc  
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## M.L. 2011 Projects

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### **Appropriation Language**

\$1,000,000 the first year and \$1,000,000 the second year are from the trust fund to the commissioner of natural resources for an agreement with the Redwood Area Communities Foundation to acquire lands with high-quality native plant communities and rare features to be established as scientific and natural areas as provided in Minnesota Statutes, section 86A.05, subdivision 5. A list of proposed acquisitions must be provided as part of the required work program. Land acquired with this appropriation must be sufficiently improved to meet at least minimum management standards, as determined by the commissioner of natural resources. Up to \$54,000 may be retained by the Department of Natural Resources at the request of the Redwood Area Communities Foundation for transaction costs, associated professional services, and restoration needs. This appropriation is available until June 30, 2014, by which time the project must be completed and final products delivered.

### **Project Overview**

Minnesota's Scientific and Natural Areas (SNA) Program is an effort to preserve and perpetuate the state's ecological diversity and ensure that no single rare feature is lost from any region of the state. This includes landforms, fossil remains, plant and animal communities, rare and endangered species, and other unique biotic or geological features. These sites play an important role in scientific study, public education, and outdoor recreation. The Redwood Area Communities Foundation is using this appropriation to work in partnership with the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources to acquire approximately 420 acres of lands in the Minnesota River Valley containing some of the most ecologically sensitive plant communities, rare species, and other unique natural resources in the area. Acquired lands will be established as Scientific and Natural Areas.

**Project due to be completed:** 6/30/2014

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### **Native Prairie Stewardship and Native Prairie Bank Acquisition**

Subd. 04h \$1,000,000 TF

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### **Appropriation Language**

\$500,000 the first year and \$500,000 the second year are from the trust fund to the commissioner of natural resources to acquire native prairie bank easements, prepare baseline property assessments, restore and enhance native prairie sites, and provide technical assistance to landowners. This appropriation is available until June 30, 2014, by which time the project must be completed and final

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products delivered.

### Project Overview

Prior to European settlement more than 18 million acres of prairie covered Minnesota. Today less than 1% of that native prairie remains, and about half of those remaining acres are in private landownership without any formal protection currently in place. Through this appropriation the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources will work with private landowners of high quality native prairie sites to protect remaining native prairie using a variety of tools. Approximately 200 acres are expected to be permanently protected through Native Prairie Bank conservation easements. A variety of restoration and enhancement activities will be implemented on a total of about 900 acres. Additionally, education and technical assistance will be provided to interested landowners to help them improve the management and stewardship of native prairie sites they own.

**Project due to be completed:** 6/30/2014

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### Metropolitan Conservation Corridors (MeCC) - Phase VI

Subd. 04i \$3,475,000 TF

#### Sarah Strommen

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### Appropriation Language

\$1,737,000 the first year and \$1,738,000 the second year are from the trust fund to the commissioner of natural resources for the acceleration of agency programs and cooperative agreements. Of this appropriation, \$150,000 the first year and \$150,000 the second year are to the commissioner of natural resources for agency programs and \$3,175,000 is for the agreements as follows: \$100,000 the first year and \$100,000 the second year with Friends of the Mississippi River; \$517,000 the first year and \$518,000 the second year with Dakota County; \$200,000 the first year and \$200,000 the second year with Great River Greening; \$220,000 the first year and \$220,000 the second year with Minnesota Land Trust; \$300,000 the first year and \$300,000 the second year with Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge Trust, Inc.; and \$250,000 the first year and \$250,000 the second year with The Trust for Public Land for planning, restoring, and protecting priority natural areas in the metropolitan area, as defined under Minnesota Statutes, section 473.121, subdivision 2, and portions of the surrounding counties, through contracted services, technical assistance, conservation easements, and fee title 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 corridor areas as defined in the work program. This appropriation may not be used for the purchase of habitable residential structures, unless expressly approved in the work program. All conservation easements must be perpetual and have a natural resource management plan. Any land acquired in fee title by the commissioner of natural resources with money from this appropriation must be designated as an outdoor recreation unit under Minnesota Statutes, section 86A.07. The

## M.L. 2011 Projects

commissioner may similarly designate any lands acquired in less than fee title. A list of proposed restorations and fee title and easement acquisitions must be provided as part of the required work program. An entity that acquires a conservation easement with appropriations from the trust fund must have a long-term stewardship plan for the easement and a fund established for monitoring and enforcing the agreement. Money appropriated from the trust fund for easement acquisition may be used to establish a monitoring, management, and enforcement fund as approved in the work program. An annual financial report is required for any monitoring, management, and enforcement fund established, including expenditures from the fund. This appropriation is available until June 30, 2014, by which time the project must be completed and final products delivered.

### Overall Project Overview

Though many parts of the Twin Cities metropolitan area are urbanized, there are also has large areas of natural lands that continue to serve as important habitat for fish, wildlife, and plant communities. However, pressure on these remaining lands continues to intensify as population and development pressures increase. This appropriation represents the sixth phase of an ongoing effort by a partnership of state and non-profit organizations, called the Metro Conservation Corridors (MeCC) partnership, to conduct strategic and coordinated land protection, restoration, and enhancement activities that build connections between remaining natural areas and ensures their benefits are available for future generations. This phase involves seven partners and is expected to result in the permanent protection of more than 600 acres and the restoration and enhancement of more than 750 acres.

### Individual Partner Project Overviews

- *1.1/1.2 - MeCC VI - Coordination, Mapping & Outreach & Mapping and Database Work - Minnesota Land Trust (\$40,000)*

The Minnesota Land Trust provides coordination, mapping, and data management for the Metropolitan Conservation Corridors partnership. Funds are being used to coordinate the partnership, guide strategic outreach and implementation efforts, manage project data, and provide reporting and mapping of accomplishments.

- *2.1 - MeCC VI - Restore and Enhance Significant Watershed Habitat - Friends of the Mississippi River (\$200,000)*

Friends of the Mississippi is using this appropriation to restore and enhance approximately 163 acres of permanently protected prairie and forest lands in Dakota, Washington, Ramsey, and Hennepin counties in order increase the amount of high quality habitat within designated conservation corridors. Specific activities will include updating management plans, soil preparation, prescribed burning, native vegetation installation, woody encroachment removal, and invasive species control.

- *2.3 - MeCC VI - Restoring Our Lands and Waters - Great River Greening (\$400,000)*

These funds will enable Great River Greening to restore approximately 121 acres of permanently protected forests, savanna, prairie, and wetland habitat and 0.18 miles of shoreland habitat while engaging hundreds of volunteers in the stewardship of the Metropolitan area's remaining natural areas. Specific activities include invasive species control, seeding/planting, prescribed burning, and other associated activities.

- *2.6/3.3 - MeCC VI - Priority Expansion and Restoration MN Valley NW Refuge - Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge Trust Inc. (\$600,000)*

The Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge Trust is using this appropriation to purchase a total of approximately 125 acres of land to expand the Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge and to restore and enhance approximately 405 acres of oak savanna and remnant native prairie communities within the refuge. Many benefits are anticipated from this project,

## M.L. 2011 Projects

including improved habitat connectivity, protection of native species, improved water quality in the Minnesota River, and increased public access to natural lands for activities such as hiking, hunting, and fishing.

- *2.7/3.7 - MeCC VI - Dakota County Riparian and Lakeshore Protection - Dakota County (\$1,035,000)*

Through this appropriation Dakota County plans to permanently protect approximately 287 acres along rivers, including the Vermillion and Cannon Rivers, by securing conservation easements from willing landowners. For all acres protected, natural resource management plans will be prepared to ensure their long term stewardship. Additionally, restoration and enhancement activities are expected to occur on approximately 75 acres.

- *3.1 - MeCC VI - TPL's Critical Land Protection Program - Trust for Public Land (\$500,000)*

The Trust for Public Land is using this appropriation to purchase approximately 30 acres of land and 0.3 miles of shoreline with high ecological value and then convey the land to state or local governments for long-term stewardship and protection. Lands being considered for permanent protection in this round of funding include areas around the Rum River and Rice Creek in Anoka County, Lindstrom Natural Area in Chisago County, Savage Fen Scientific and Natural Area and Pike Lake in Scott County, and St. Croix/Fraconia-Scandia Scientific and Natural Area in Washington County.

- *3.2 - MeCC VI - Protect Significant Habitat by Acquiring Conservation Easements - Minnesota Land Trust (\$400,000)*

With this appropriation, the Minnesota Land Trust plans to protect 150 acres of high quality forest, prairie, or wetland habitat by securing permanent conservation easements and dedicating funds for their perpetual monitoring, management, and enforcement. Lands being considered for permanent protection in this round of funding are located in Anoka, Carver, Goodhue, Hennepin, Isanti, Washington, and Wright counties.

- *3.5 - MeCC VI - Aquatic Management Area Acquisition - [MN DNR](#) (\$300,000)*

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources is using this appropriation to purchase 35 acres, with 0.6 miles of shoreline, along the Vermillion River in Dakota County to be managed as Aquatic Management Areas. Priority will be given to lands that have a high risk of development, provide protection to shoreline and riparian zones, and allow access for anglers and habitat improvement projects.

**Project due to be completed:** 6/30/2014

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### **Habitat Conservation Partnership (HCP) - Phase VII**

Subd. 04j \$3,475,000 TF

#### **Joe Pavelko**

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#### **Appropriation Language**

## M.L. 2011 Projects

\$1,737,000 the first year and \$1,738,000 the second year are from the trust fund to the commissioner of natural resources for the acceleration of agency programs and cooperative agreements. Of this appropriation, \$125,000 the first year and \$125,000 the second year are to the commissioner of natural resources for agency programs and \$3,225,000 is for agreements as follows: \$637,000 the first year and \$638,000 the second year with Ducks Unlimited, Inc.; \$38,000 the first year and \$37,000 the second year with Friends of Detroit Lakes Wetland Management District; \$25,000 the first year and \$25,000 the second year with Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe; \$225,000 the first year and \$225,000 the second year with Minnesota Land Trust; \$200,000 the first year and \$200,000 the second year with Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge Trust, Inc.; \$242,000 the first year and \$243,000 the second year with Pheasants Forever, Inc.; and \$245,000 the first year and \$245,000 the second year with The Trust for Public Land to plan, restore, and acquire fragmented landscape corridors that connect areas of quality habitat to sustain fish, wildlife, and plants. The United States Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service, is an authorized cooperating partner in the appropriation. Expenditures are limited to the project corridor areas as defined in the work program. Land acquired with this appropriation must be sufficiently improved to meet at least minimum habitat and facility management standards, as determined by the commissioner of natural resources. This appropriation may not be used for the purchase of habitable residential structures, unless expressly approved in the work program. All conservation easements must be perpetual and have a natural resource management plan. Any land acquired in fee title by the commissioner of natural resources with money from this appropriation must be designated as an outdoor recreation unit under Minnesota Statutes, section 86A.07. The commissioner may similarly designate any lands acquired in less than fee title. A list of proposed restorations and fee title and easement acquisitions must be provided as part of the required work program. An entity who acquires a conservation easement with appropriations from the trust fund must have a long-term stewardship plan for the easement and a fund established for monitoring and enforcing the agreement. Money appropriated from the trust fund for easement acquisition may be used to establish a monitoring, management, and enforcement fund as approved in the work program. An annual financial report is required for any monitoring, management, and enforcement fund established, including expenditures from the fund. This appropriation is available until June 30, 2014, by which time the project must be completed and final products delivered.

### Overall Project Overview

With continued land use changes in Minnesota, areas that once served as important areas for fish, wildlife, and plant habitat have become fragmented and disconnected resulting in adverse impacts on these ecological communities. Strategic and coordinated efforts in protection, restoration, and enhancement of lands throughout Minnesota can create land and water corridors that reconnect remaining habitat areas and reverse some of the adverse impacts. This appropriation represents the seventh phase of an ongoing effort by a partnership of state, federal, and non-profit organizations, called the Habitat Corridors Partnership (HCP), to do such strategic and coordinated land protection, restoration, and enhancement. Earlier phases of this project have resulted in the protection, restoration, or enhancement of more than 100,000 acres throughout the state. Many of these projects matched Trust Fund money with non-state funds, stretching these dollars to provide a greater benefit to the state. This phase involves eight partners and is expected to result in the permanent protection of approximately 1,100 acres and restoration or enhancement of more than 630 acres. Projects from the individual partners are listed below.

### Individual Partner Project Overviews

- *1a - HCP VII - Coordination, Mapping & Data Management - Pheasants Forever Inc. (\$51,000)*  
Pheasants Forever provides coordination, mapping, and data management for the Habitat

## M.L. 2011 Projects

Corridors Partnership. Funds are being used to coordinate the partnership, guide strategic outreach and implementation efforts, manage project data, and provide reporting and mapping of accomplishments.

- *2e - HCP VII - Wild Rice/Waterfowl Habitat: Enhancement and Long-term Monitoring (2e) - Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe (\$50,000)*

The Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe is working within the Leech Lake Reservation boundaries to address loss and degradation of aquatic habitat for wild rice and waterfowl. Efforts will include regulating water levels on shallow lakes by controlling beaver activity and conducting periodic water level draw-downs, reseeding of approximately 200 acres of wild rice, and implementing adaptive management based on analysis of wild rice productivity.

- *2g - HCP VII - Restoration & Management - Wildlife Management Areas - MN DNR (\$30,000)*

An estimated 200 acres of lands acquired through this phase of the Habitat Corridors Partnership are expected to be transferred to the state for designation as Wildlife Management Areas (WMA). The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources is using these funds to conduct habitat restoration on these new WMA lands, as well as develop the infrastructure necessary for public access to them.

- *2h - HCP VII - Restoration & Management - DNR Fisheries - MN DNR (\$200,000)*

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources is coordinating efforts to improve habitat for aquatic species and protect water quality on lakes, streams, and their surrounding sensitive shorelands. A total of up to 3.5 miles or 35 acres of water bodies in Kandiyohi, Otter Tail, Rice, or Stevens Counties are expected to benefit from restoration activities including installation of aeration systems, development of spawning areas, installation of native vegetation, and stabilization of stream banks.

- *2o - HCP VII - Prairie Pothole Restoration on Waterfowl Areas - Friends of the Detroit Lakes Wetland Management District (\$75,000)*

Friends of the Detroit Lakes Wetland Management District is using these funds to restore approximately 50 acres of prairie pothole wetlands in Clay and Becker Counties. Efforts aim to create wildlife habitat for waterfowl and other species and reduce downstream flooding of the Red River Valley by increasing the capacity of the land to hold and store water from spring runoff and severe storms.

- *3a - HCP VII - Shoreland Protection Program - Minnesota Land Trust (\$450,000)*

With this appropriation, the Minnesota Land Trust plans to protect approximately 500 acres of critical shoreline habitat along Minnesota's lakes, wetlands, rivers, and streams by securing permanent conservation easements and dedicating funds for their perpetual monitoring, management, and enforcement. Lands being considered for permanent protection in this round of funding are located in Becker, Beltrami, Blue Earth, Itasca, Kandiyohi, Lac Qui Parle, Le Sueur, Otter Tail, Pope, and Wabasha counties.

- *3c - HCP VII - Shallow Lake Conservation Easements - Ducks Unlimited Inc. (\$500,000)*

This appropriation is enabling Ducks Unlimited to help state and federal wildlife conservation agencies protect and restore shallow lakes for waterfowl. Conservation easements will be acquired on approximately 150 acres of privately owned shoreland and up to 60 acres of lands previously converted for cropping will be restored back to wildlife habitat. Lands being considered for permanent protection in this round of funding are located in Beltrami, Douglas, Freeborn, Grant, Meeker, Pope, Stearns, Swift, and Wright counties.

- *3d - HCP VII - Wetlands Reserve Program - Ducks Unlimited Inc. and USDA NRCS (775,000)*

The U.S. Department of Agriculture and Ducks Unlimited are working together to provide technical assistance to landowners that will result in the protection of approximately 2,500 acres of prairies and wetlands in southern and western Minnesota. As a result of this

## M.L. 2011 Projects

appropriation, an estimated \$4 million of additional funding for conservation is anticipated to be provided in match by the federal Wetland Reserve Program.

- *4a - HCP VII - WMA/WPA Acquisition beyond Boundaries - Pheasants Forever Inc. (\$434,000)*  
These funds are enabling Pheasants Forever to acquire in fee title approximately 86 acres of habitat along the borders of existing Wildlife Management Areas (WMA) or Waterfowl Production Areas (WPA) in LeSueur, Lincoln, or Rice counties and convey the lands to a public agency for long term stewardship and protection. These strategic acquisitions will leverage and expand the existing habitat, water quality, and recreation benefits already provided by existing protected lands.
- *4c - HCP VII - TPLs Critical Lands Protection Program - Trust for Public Land (\$490,000)*  
The Trust for Public Land is using this appropriation to acquire in fee title approximately 44 acres of high quality habitat and convey it the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources for long-term stewardship and protection. Priority will be given to shoreland and other lands that provide natural buffers to water resources. Lands being considered for permanent protection in this round of funding are located in Hubbard, Kandiyohi, LeSueur, and Rice counties.
- *4h - HCP VII - Priority Acquisition, MN Valley Wetland Management District - Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge Trust Inc. (\$400,000)*  
The Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge Trust is using this appropriation to purchase a total of approximately 80 acres of high quality grasslands and wetlands in Blue Earth or Le Sueur County to be managed as a federal Waterfowl Production Area (WPA) in the Minnesota Valley Wetland Management District.
- *4i - HCP VII - Habitat Acquisition - DNR Professional Services - MN DNR (\$20,000)*  
An estimated 400 acres acquired by other Habitat Corridors Partnership (HCP) partners is expected to be transferred to the DNR for long-term management during this phase of the partnership. The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is using these funds to cover professional services costs associated with these property transfers.

**Project due to be completed: 6/30/2014**

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### **Natural and Scenic Area Acquisition Grants**

Subd. 04k \$1,000,000 TF

#### **Ronald Potter**

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#### **Appropriation Language**

\$500,000 the first year and \$500,000 the second year are from the trust fund to the commissioner of natural resources to provide matching grants to local governments for acquisition of natural and scenic areas, as provided in Minnesota Statutes, section 85.019, subdivision 4a. This appropriation is available until June 30, 2014, by which time the project must be completed and final products delivered.

## M.L. 2011 Projects

### Project Overview

The Natural and Scenic Area Grant Program is a competitive, matching grant program that partners the state with local communities to help them acquire and permanently protect natural and scenic resources that do not qualify for state designation but have important local or regional significance. Natural and scenic areas provide for public use, protection of species and natural communities, appreciation of scenic vistas, and scientific and educational opportunities. This appropriation will allow the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources to provide up to six matching grants to cities, counties, townships, or school districts for acquisition of approximately 150 acres of new or expanded natural and scenic areas.

**Project due to be completed:** 6/30/2014

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### Acceleration of Minnesota Conservation Assistance

Subd. 04I \$625,000 TF

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#### Appropriation Language

\$313,000 the first year and \$312,000 the second year are from the trust fund to the Board of Water and Soil Resources to provide grants to soil and water conservation districts to provide technical assistance to secure enrollment and retention of private lands in federal and state programs for conservation.

### Project Overview

Enrollment of private lands in conservation programs can provide important natural resource and other public benefits by taking the lands out of production so that they can provide various wildlife and ecological benefits. This appropriation is enabling the Minnesota Board of Soil and Water Resources to provide grants to local soil and water conservation districts for employment of technical staff to assist private landowners in implementing conservation programs. This effort is expected to assist with the enrollment, retention, and management of 30,000 private acres of grasslands, wetlands, and forests in federal and state conservation programs, particularly in areas expected to lose enrollments in the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP).

**Project due to be completed:** 6/30/2013

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### Conservation Easement Stewardship and Enforcement Program - Phase II

Subd. 04m \$500,000 TF

#### Susan Damon

MN DNR

## M.L. 2011 Projects

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St Paul, MN 55155

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### Appropriation Language

\$250,000 the first year and \$250,000 the second year are from the trust fund to the commissioner of natural resources to accelerate the implementation of the Phase I Conservation Easement Stewardship Plan being developed with an appropriation from Laws 2008, chapter 367, section 2, subdivision 5, paragraph (h).

### Project Overview

The purchase of conservation easements - restrictions on land use that protect natural features while keeping land in private ownership - has proven to be an effective means to protect land at a far lower initial cost than full state ownership. However, once an easement is purchased there are ongoing stewardship, monitoring, and enforcement responsibilities necessary to ensure the terms of the agreement between the easement holder and the landowner are met. An earlier effort funded by the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund in 2008 allowed the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to develop a central inventory and management system of the conservation easements held by the DNR, along with a plan for how the DNR's conservation easements would be administered into the future. This appropriation is allowing the DNR to continue and accelerate the implementation of the previously developed plan.

**Project due to be completed:** 6/30/2013

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### Recovery of At-Risk Native Prairie Species

Subd. 04n \$147,000 TF

#### Rich Perrine

Martin County Soil and Water Conservation District  
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Fairmont, MN 56031

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### Appropriation Language

\$73,000 the first year and \$74,000 the second year are from the trust fund to the Board of Water and Soil Resources for an agreement with the Martin County Soil and Water Conservation District to collect, propagate, and plant declining, at-risk native species on protected habitat and to enhance private market sources for local ecotype native seed. This appropriation is available until June 30, 2014, by which time the project must be completed and final products delivered.

### Project Overview

## M.L. 2011 Projects

With less than 1% of the original native prairie remaining in the state, many locally-adapted prairie species are in decline and at-risk of being lost due to continued habitat fragmentation and land conversion. This poses challenges to efforts to preserve these species because seed sources for these plants are therefore also becoming fewer. Using this appropriation the Martin County Soil and Water Conservation District aims to help reverse this trend. Through partnerships with local seed growers and nurseries they will collect, propagate, and plant these declining and at-risk, locally-adapted plant species on protected habitat as part of restoration efforts in order to encourage and increase their presence on the landscape.

**Project due to be completed:** 6/30/2014

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### **Understanding Threats, Genetic Diversity, and Conservation Options for Wild Rice**

Subd. 04o \$195,000 TF

#### **David Biesboer**

U of MN  
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## **RESEARCH**

### **Appropriation Language**

\$97,000 the first year and \$98,000 the second year are from the trust fund to the Board of Regents of the University of Minnesota to research the genetic diversity of wild rice population throughout Minnesota for use in related conservation and restoration efforts. This appropriation is contingent upon demonstration of review and cooperation with the Native American tribal nations in Minnesota. Equipment purchased with this appropriation must be available for future publicly funded projects at no charge except for typical operating expenses. This appropriation is available until June 30, 2014, by which time the project must be completed and final products delivered.

### **Project Overview**

The ecological, economic, and cultural and historical values embodied by wild rice is said to be unmatched by any other native plant species in Minnesota. However, naturally occurring wild rice in the state now faces a multitude of threats, such as loss of habitat from development, competition from invasive species, impacts from mining and other industrial activity, and hydrologic changes in lakes, rivers, and streams. It is recognized that to preserve wild rice in Minnesota it is critical to maintain its genetic diversity, yet knowledge of genetic diversity in wild rice is limited. Scientists at the University of Minnesota's Department of Plant Biology are using this appropriation to study the genetic diversity of wild rice in Minnesota in order to enhance options and inform best practices for wild rice protection and restoration.

**Project due to be completed:** 6/30/2014

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## M.L. 2011 Projects

### Southeast Minnesota Stream Restoration

Subd. 04p \$250,000 TF

#### Jeff Hastings

Trout Unlimited Inc  
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Westby, WI 54667

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**Web:** <http://www.tu.org/driftless>

#### Appropriation Language

\$125,000 the first year and \$125,000 the second year are from the trust fund to the commissioner of natural resources for an agreement with Trout Unlimited to restore at least four miles of riparian corridor for trout and nongame species in southeast Minnesota and increase local capacities to implement stream restoration through training and technical assistance. This appropriation is available until June 30, 2014, by which time the project must be completed and final products delivered.

#### Project Overview

Early European settlement and agricultural practices from the 1850s to the 1930s led to wide scale erosion, flooding, and altering of streams and valleys in southeast Minnesota. Hundreds of miles of clean coldwater creeks and streams were inundated with fine sediment as a result. While land use practices have improved, many streams still suffer from the practices of the past. Trout Unlimited is using this appropriation to work with private citizens and federal, state, and county agencies to conduct 12 showcase stream habitat restorations on more than four miles of southeastern Minnesota streams that will serve as models and build local capacity to conduct future restorations. Restoration target areas include parts of the Cannon River in Dakota County, Hay Creek in Goodhue County, Zumbro River in Wabasha County, Mill Creek in Olmsted County, Whitewater River in Winona County, Root River in Fillmore County, and Winnebago River in Houston County.

**Project due to be completed:** 6/30/2014

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### Restoration Strategies for Ditched Peatland and Scientific and Natural Areas

Subd. 04q \$200,000 TF

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## RESEARCH

## M.L. 2011 Projects

### Appropriation Language

\$100,000 the first year and \$100,000 the second year are from the trust fund to the commissioner of natural resources to evaluate the hydrology and habitat of the Winter Road Lake peatland watershed protection area to determine the effects of ditch abandonment and examine the potential for restoration of patterned peatlands. This appropriation is available until June 30, 2014, by which time the project must be completed and final products delivered.

### Project Overview

Thirty-seven percent of the naturally stored carbon in Minnesota occurs in a unique ecosystem type called peatlands that covers only 10% of the state. Peatlands form where water levels are near the surface and drainage is poor, which slows decomposition of plant debris and results in an accumulation of these organic materials in a partially decomposed mass called peat. Peatland ecology is largely governed by the water flowing through them and disruption of this flow can have profound impacts on the accumulation of peat, landforms, and vegetation. One peatland located in Lake of the Woods and Roseau counties, the Winter Road Lake Peatland, experienced such disruption in the early 1900's when a failed attempt to drain the lands for agriculture left behind numerous drainage ditches. The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources is using this appropriation to evaluate the effects of this ditching on peatland hydrology and habitat in order to understand options for peatland restoration and possibly create potential for wetland banking credits. Findings will be used to guide restoration strategies for peatlands throughout the state.

**Project due to be completed:** 6/30/2014

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### Northeast Minnesota White Cedar Plant Community Restoration

Subd. 04r \$250,000 TF

#### Dale Krystosek

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### Appropriation Language

\$125,000 for the first year and \$125,000 the second year are from the trust fund to the Board of Water and Soil Resources to assess the decline of northern white cedar plant communities in northeast Minnesota, prioritize cedar sites for restoration, and provide cedar restoration training to local units of government.

### Project Overview

Northern white cedar wetland plant communities provide a number of specialized habitat functions, including winter refuge for deer and other wildlife, thermal buffering for brook trout streams, and critical habitat for songbirds and other unique wildlife such as martens and fishers. However, these plant communities have been declining in Minnesota for decades mostly as a result of development impacts. The Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources is using this appropriation to try to improve the

## M.L. 2011 Projects

quantity and quality of white cedar wetland plant communities in Minnesota. Efforts will include assessing existing white cedar communities to prioritize sites for restoration and then providing training and demonstration of restoration and re-vegetation techniques for local natural resource managers.

**Project due to be completed:** 6/30/2014

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### Land and Water Conservation Account (LAWCON) Federal Reimbursement

Subd. 04s \$750,000 LAWCON

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MN DNR

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#### Appropriation Language

\$750,000 is from the state land and water conservation account (LAWCON) in the natural resources fund to the commissioner of natural resources for priorities established by the commissioner for eligible state projects and administrative and planning activities consistent with Minnesota Statutes, section 116P.14, and the federal Land and Water Conservation Fund Act. This appropriation is available until June 30, 2014, by which time the project must be completed and final products delivered.

#### Project Overview

Through the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LAWCON) the Federal government designates a portion of receipts from offshore oil and gas leases to be provided to state and local governments to fund conservation and outdoor recreation efforts. The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources is using this appropriation to support costs required to maintain eligibility for future LAWCON funding and for acquisition, development, and redevelopment of parks and recreation areas in the state.

**Project due to be completed:** 6/30/2014

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## SUBD. 05 WATER RESOURCES

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### Itasca County Sensitive Lakeshore Identification

Subd. 05a \$160,000 TF

#### Jim Gustafson

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Grand Rapids, MN 55744

**Phone:** (218) 326-0017

## M.L. 2011 Projects

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Web: <http://www.itascaswcd.org>

### Appropriation Language

\$80,000 the first year and \$80,000 the second year are from the trust fund to the commissioner of natural resources for an agreement with Itasca County Soil and Water Conservation District to identify sensitive lakeshore and restorable shoreline in Itasca County. Up to \$130,000 may be retained by the Department of Natural Resources at the request of Itasca County to provide technical assistance.

### Project Overview

Poorly planned development along lakeshores negatively impacts lake ecosystems by degrading water quality and fish and wildlife habitat. Given the increased demand for shoreland property, protection of the most ecologically sensitive shorelands is critical. The Itasca County Soil and Water Conservation District is using this appropriation to assess shorelands on high priority lakes in the county to identify the most ecologically sensitive lakeshore as a means of guiding and prioritizing future conservation efforts.

**Project due to be completed:** 6/30/2013

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## Trout Stream Springshed Mapping in Southeast Minnesota - Phase III

Subd. 05b \$500,000 TF

### Part 1 (\$220,000)

#### Jeff Green

MN DNR

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### Part 2 (\$280,000)

#### E. Calvin Alexander

U of MN

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### Appropriation Language

\$250,000 the first year and \$250,000 the second year are from the trust fund to continue to identify and delineate water supply areas and springsheds for springs serving as cold water sources for trout streams and to assess the impacts from development and water appropriations. Of this appropriation, \$140,000 each year is to the Board of Regents of the University of Minnesota and \$110,000 each year is to the commissioner of natural resources.

### Project Overview

## M.L. 2011 Projects

Native trout require clean, cold water that usually originates from springs. However the groundwater springs feeding the 173 designated trout streams in southeastern Minnesota are under increasing pressure from current and expected changes in land use and increased groundwater withdrawals for domestic, agricultural, and industrial use. This joint effort by the University of Minnesota and the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources is working to identify and map the springs and the areas that feed them in order to understand how these springheds might be affected by development and increased water use and determine what can be done to protect and restore their water quality.

**Project due to be completed:** 6/30/2013

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### Mississippi River Water Quality Assessment

Subd. 05c \$557,000 TF

#### Michael Sadowsky

U of MN

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## RESEARCH

### Appropriation Language

\$278,000 the first year and \$279,000 the second year are from the trust fund to the Board of Regents of the University of Minnesota to assess water quality in the Mississippi River using DNA sequencing approaches and chemical analyses. The assessments shall be incorporated into a Web-based educational tool for use in classrooms and public exhibits. This appropriation is available until June 30, 2014, by which time the project must be completed and final products delivered.

### Project Overview

Minnesota contains the headwaters of the Mississippi River, one of the largest and most important waterways in the world. A vital force in all life processes, microorganisms play a major role in the river's water quality through the biological and chemical processing they provide and as indicators of how human activity is impacting water quality. However, relatively little is actually known about as much as 99% of the microorganisms present in the river. Improved understanding of these microorganisms and the effects they have on water quality will greatly enhance efforts by federal, state, and local agencies to maintain and improve the Mississippi River's water quality. Scientists at the University of Minnesota are using this appropriation to use DNA sequencing and chemical analysis technologies to capture for the first time a more complete picture of the diversity and function of microorganisms in the river and how they influence water quality. As part of this effort, hands-on student and teacher participation and public engagement through educational exhibits will help improve public understanding of the importance of the river and water quality.

**Project due to be completed:** 6/30/2014

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## M.L. 2011 Projects

### Zumbro River Watershed Restoration Prioritization

Subd. 05d \$150,000 TF

#### Lisa Eadens

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#### Appropriation Language

\$75,000 the first year and \$75,000 the second year are from the trust fund to the commissioner of natural resources for an agreement with the Zumbro Watershed Partnership, Inc. to identify sources of erosion and runoff in the Zumbro River Watershed in order to prioritize restoration and protection projects.

#### Project Overview

Within the Zumbro River Watershed of southeast Minnesota, studies suggest that small areas of the landscape contribute disproportionately to nonpoint source pollution. However, because a coordinated, watershed-wide approach to prioritizing and implementing conservation practices in the watershed does not currently exist, conservation practices are being implemented opportunistically and not necessarily where they might have the greatest impact. Through this appropriation the Zumbro Watershed Partnership is coordinating a planning and prioritization effort that will guide future implementation of restoration and protection practices in order to maximize water quality benefits and ensure the most effective use of resources.

**Project due to be completed:** 6/30/2013

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### Assessment of Minnesota River Antibiotic Concentrations

Subd. 05e \$190,000 TF

#### Kristine Wammer

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## RESEARCH

#### Appropriation Language

\$95,000 the first year and \$95,000 the second year are from the trust fund to the commissioner of

## M.L. 2011 Projects

natural resources for an agreement with Saint Thomas University in cooperation with Gustavus Adolphus College and the University of Minnesota to measure antibiotic concentrations and antibiotic resistance levels at sites on the Minnesota River.

### Project Overview

The occurrences of contaminants including antibiotics, other pharmaceuticals, and personal care products in the environment have gained increasing attention in recent years because of their potential health and ecological impacts. However, serious gaps remain in our understanding of these contaminants and the significance of the threats they may pose. Through this appropriation scientists at the University of St. Thomas, Gustavus Adolphus College, and the University of Minnesota are cooperating to focus specifically on the threats posed by antibiotics to understand which antibiotics are of the most concern - for example, because of their potential to increase antibiotic resistance - and to delineate their urban and rural sources. Findings will help develop strategies to manage threats and minimize future impacts posed by antibiotics to human and ecological health.

**Project due to be completed:** 6/30/2013

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## SUBD. 06 AQUATIC AND TERRESTRIAL INVASIVE SPECIES

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### Improved Detection of Harmful Microbes in Ballast Water

Subd. 06a \$250,000 TF

#### Randall Hicks

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## RESEARCH

### Appropriation Language

\$125,000 the first year and \$125,000 the second year are from the trust fund to the Board of Regents of the University of Minnesota for the University of Minnesota Duluth to identify and analyze potentially harmful bacteria transported into Lake Superior through ship ballast water discharge. This appropriation is available until June 30, 2014, by which time the project must be completed and final products delivered.

### Project Overview

Ballast water - water carried in tanks on ships to help provide stability and aid steering - is likely the single greatest source for introduction of non-native and invasive aquatic species. Ballast water is collected in one body of water and discharged into another body of water, usually large distances apart. The recent appearance of a deadly fish virus called Viral Hemorrhagic Septicemia (VHS) in the Great Lakes has raised awareness that some bacteria being transported in ballast water, just like certain plant and animal species, also have the potential to be harmful invasive species. Nevertheless, little is actually

## M.L. 2011 Projects

currently known about what bacteria are being transported and what can be done to prevent their spread. Biologists at the University of Minnesota - Duluth are using this appropriation to identify and analyze bacteria being transported in ballast water in order to determine which are of greatest concern and to inform strategies for early detection and spread prevention.

**Project due to be completed:** 6/30/2014

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### **Emerald Ash Borer Biocontrol Research and Implementation**

Subd. 06b \$500,000 TF

#### **Monika Chandler**

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## **RESEARCH**

### **Appropriation Language**

\$250,000 the first year and \$250,000 the second year are from the trust fund to the commissioner of agriculture to assess a biocontrol method for suppressing emerald ash borers by testing bioagent winter survival potential, developing release and monitoring methods, and piloting implementation of emerald ash borer biocontrol. This appropriation is available until June 30, 2014, by which time the project must be completed and final products delivered.

### **Project Overview**

The Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) is an invasive insect that has been decimating ash trees throughout the Great Lake states and is currently advancing into Minnesota where it threatens the nearly 1 billion ash trees that occur throughout the state - the second most in any state. Loss of these trees would devastate ecosystems throughout Minnesota and have major economic impacts for the forest products industry as well as through the costs associated with treatment, removal, and replacement of lost trees. Biological control - the use of a natural enemy of a species from its native habitat to help with control of that species - is currently the only promising long-term management strategy for EAB. The Minnesota Department of Agriculture is using this appropriation to pilot and assess the effectiveness of a biocontrol method for EAB in Minnesota that involves the use of three types of tiny, stingless wasps that are parasitoids of EAB.

**Project due to be completed:** 6/30/2014

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### **Evaluation of Switchgrass as Biofuel Crop**

Subd. 06c \$120,000 TF

#### **Jim Eckberg**

## M.L. 2011 Projects

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### RESEARCH

#### Appropriation Language

\$60,000 the first year and \$60,000 the second year are from the trust fund to the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities System for Central Lakes College in cooperation with the University of Minnesota to determine the invasion risk of selectively bred native grasses for biofuel production and develop strategies to minimize the invasion potential and impacts on biodiversity. This appropriation is available until June 30, 2014, by which time the project must be completed and final products delivered.

#### Project Overview

Bioenergy, a form of renewable energy derived from biological sources such as wood or grasses, is becoming an important component of the energy production mix. Native switchgrass is a species that has shown potential as a biofuel crop and efforts have been underway to selectively breed and hybridize it for maximize yield. However, these selectively bred switchgrass varieties also show some potential to be invasive and crowd out native biodiversity, resulting in significant ecological and economic impacts. Scientists at Central Lakes College and the University of Minnesota are using this appropriation to evaluate the invasion risk of selectively bred switchgrass varieties and develop strategies to minimize the invasion potential and impacts on biodiversity. Findings will help support long-term biofuel sustainability.

**Project due to be completed:** 6/30/2014

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### SUBD. 07 RENEWABLE ENERGY

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#### Supporting Community-Driven Sustainable Bioenergy Projects

Subd. 07 \$150,000 TF

#### Kathryn Fernholz

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#### Appropriation Language

\$75,000 the first year and \$75,000 the second year are from the trust fund to the commissioner of natural resources for an agreement with Dovetail Partners, Inc. in cooperation with the University of

## M.L. 2011 Projects

Minnesota to assess feasibility, impacts, and management needs of community-scale forest bioenergy systems through pilot studies in Ely and Cook County and to disseminate findings to inform related efforts in other communities.

### Project Overview

Small scale community bioenergy systems hold significant promise for increasing energy security, reducing carbon emissions, and contributing to local economies. These types of systems rely on materials such as wood and grasses sourced from the surrounding area as fuel sources for local energy production. However, many questions still remain about how to effectively and sustainably implement these types of community bioenergy systems. Dovetail Partners is piloting an effort with the City of Ely and Cook County to develop the information and tools necessary for communities to assess the viability of these types of energy systems based on the resources available within their own regions.

**Project due to be completed:** 6/30/2013

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## SUBD. 08 ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

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### Youth-Led Renewable Energy and Energy Conservation in West and Southwest Minnesota

Subd. 08a \$246,000 TF

#### Shelli-Kae Foster

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**Web:** <http://www.youthenergysummit.org/>

#### Appropriation Language

\$123,000 the first year and \$123,000 the second year are from the trust fund to the commissioner of natural resources for an agreement with Prairie Woods Environmental Learning Center to initiate youth-led renewable energy and conservation projects in over 30 communities in west central and southwest Minnesota.

#### Project Overview

Adoption of renewable energy technologies and energy conservation practices can contribute in a variety of ways to the environmental and economic health of rural Minnesota communities through costs savings and emissions reductions. Engaging and coaching students as the leaders in the process of implementing such practices provides the added benefit of increasing knowledge, teaching about potential career paths, and developing leadership experience. Using this appropriation the Prairie Woods Environmental Learning Center and its partners are expanding an existing program called the Youth Energy Summit (YES!) to implement additional youth-led renewable energy and energy conservation projects in over 30 communities in west central and southwestern Minnesota. These projects will be driven by collaboration between students, community members, and local businesses and organizations.

## M.L. 2011 Projects

**Project due to be completed:** 6/30/2013

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### **Minnesota Junior Master Naturalist Program**

Subd. 08b \$365,000 TF

#### **Robert Blair**

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Saint Paul, MN 55108

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**Web:** <http://minnesotamasternaturalist.org/>

#### **Appropriation Language**

\$365,000 the first year is from the trust fund to the Board of Regents of the University of Minnesota to expand the junior naturalist after-school programs. This appropriation is available until June 30, 2014, by which time the project must be completed and final products delivered.

#### **Project Overview**

Children are spending increasingly less time outdoors and are often failing to develop an appreciation and connection with nature. This has implications for children's health as well as their knowledge about science, the environment, and the world. In the long term this also impacts the broad public awareness and understanding necessary to ensure long-term protection and stewardship of our environment and natural resources. In order to help reverse this trend the University of Minnesota and the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources are partnering to expand and further develop an after-school program that provides outdoor, science-based educational opportunities for fourth and fifth grade students, particularly in underserved areas, to learn about the ecology and natural history of their schoolyards, neighborhoods, nearby natural areas, and the state.

**Project due to be completed:** 6/30/2013

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### **Experiential Environmental Education for Urban Youth**

Subd. 08c \$200,000 TF

#### **Mary Karius**

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#### **Appropriation Language**

## **M.L. 2011 Projects**

\$200,000 the first year is from the trust fund to the commissioner of natural resources for an agreement with Hennepin County in cooperation with community partners to initiate new environmental education programs targeting inner-city youth that provide hands-on, experiential outdoor learning opportunities. This appropriation is available until June 30, 2014, by which time the project must be completed and final products delivered.

### **Project Overview**

Many inner-city youth receive little, if any, exposure to outdoor and environmental education. This lack of exposure has implications for children's health as well as their knowledge about science, the environment, and the world. In the long term this also impacts the broad public awareness and understanding necessary to ensure long-term protection and stewardship of our environment and natural resources. Hennepin County is using this appropriation to develop a new program called UrbanWatch that will aim to provide hands-on, experiential outdoor learning experiences to inner-city students in North Minneapolis in order to increase their knowledge and skills relating to ecology, agriculture, water resources, and biological diversity.

**Project due to be completed:** 6/30/2013

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## **SUBD. 09 EMERGING ISSUES**

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### **Minnesota Conservation Apprentice Academy**

Subd. 09a \$200,000 TF

#### **Steve Woods**

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**Web:** <http://www.bwsr.state.mn.us>

### **Appropriation Language**

\$100,000 the first year and \$100,000 the second year are from the trust fund to the Board of Water and Soil Resources in cooperation with Conservation Corps Minnesota to train and mentor future conservation professionals by providing apprenticeship service opportunities to soil and water conservation districts. This appropriation is available until June 30, 2014, by which time the project must be completed and the final products delivered.

### **Project Overview**

Many of the most experienced conservation practitioners at local soil and water conservation districts throughout the state are nearing retirement, and with their departure will go much of their practical, on-the-ground knowledge, experience, and skills. Meanwhile, college students seeking to be the next generation of conservation practitioners have knowledge of emerging technologies and other innovations that can improve and contribute to current conservation efforts. Through this appropriation the Minnesota Board of Soil and Water Resources will work with the Minnesota Conservation Corps to

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continue an effort that places students in apprenticeship positions with county soil and water conservation district offices throughout the state. This unique program provides an opportunity for interns to gain valuable in-the-field experience from current practitioners while sharing their knowledge with those practitioners about the newest ideas and solutions for meeting today's natural resource challenges.

**Project due to be completed:** 6/30/2014

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### **Chronic Wasting Disease and Animal Health**

Subd. 09b \$1,200,000 TF

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#### **Appropriation Language**

\$600,000 the first year and \$600,000 the second year are from the trust fund to the commissioner of natural resources to address chronic wasting disease and accelerate wildlife health programs, including activities directly related to and necessary for this appropriation.

#### **Project Overview**

Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) is a disease found in North American deer, moose, and elk that affects the animal's brain and nervous system and is ultimately fatal to the animals that contract it. A deer harvested in southeastern Minnesota during the 2010 hunting season was found to have the disease - the first time CWD has been found in a wild deer in Minnesota. Subsequent surveillance and testing has found no other such cases of CWD. However, the single finding has prompted accelerated efforts to contain and manage its potential spread due to the serious management problems and other implications posed by CWD were it to become widespread in the state. The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources is using this appropriation to accelerate its CWD management and response plans and efforts.

**Project due to be completed:** 6/30/2013

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### **Aquatic Invasive Species**

Subd. 09c \$5,690,000 TF

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### **Appropriation Language**

\$2,177,000 the first year and \$3,513,000 the second year are from the trust fund to the commissioner of natural resources to accelerate aquatic invasive species programs, including the development and implementation of best management practices for public water access facilities to implement aquatic invasive species prevention strategies, including activities directly related to and necessary for this appropriation. \$50,000 is for a grant to develop and produce a documentary identifying the challenges presented by aquatic invasive species. The documentary shall be available to the Department of Natural Resources to distribute to watercraft license purchasers and the general public through online and other media.

### **Project Overview**

Invasive species are species that are not native to Minnesota and cause economic or environmental harm or harm to human health. Minnesota's waters are threatened by a number of aquatic invasive species including zebra mussels, Eurasian watermilfoil, common carp, and an emerging threat of Asian carp. This appropriation is allowing the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources to accelerate a variety of efforts throughout the state aimed at managing and helping to prevent the spread of aquatic invasive species.

**Project due to be completed:** 6/30/2013

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## **Reinvest in Minnesota Wetlands Reserve Acquisition and Restoration Program Partnership**

Subd. 09d \$1,645,000 TF

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Board of Water and Soil Resources

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### **Appropriation Language**

\$1,645,000 the first year is to the Board of Water and Soil Resources to acquire permanent conservation easements and restore wetlands and associated upland habitat in cooperation with the United States Department of Agriculture Wetlands Reserve Program. A list of proposed land acquisitions must be provided as part of the required work program.

### **Project Overview**

The Reinvest in Minnesota (RIM) Wetlands Reserve Program restores wetlands and grasslands through the purchase of permanent conservation easements on privately owned land. The easements limit future land use and put conservation plans in place for future management. The Minnesota Board of Soil

## M.L. 2011 Projects

and Water Resources is using this appropriation to accelerate the RIM Wetlands Reserve Program resulting in additional permanently protected wetlands and grasslands throughout the state.

**Project due to be completed:** 6/30/2013

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### Subd. 10 Administration and Contract Management

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#### Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources (LCCMR)

Subd. 10a \$946,000 TF

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#### Appropriation Language

\$473,000 the first year and \$473,000 the second year are from the trust fund to the LCCMR for administration as provided in Minnesota Statutes, section 116P.09, subdivision 5.

#### Project Overview

Per M.S. 116P.09, up to 4% of the amount available for appropriation from the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund (ENRTF) for a biennium is available for expenses related to LCCMR administration. These expenses include the LCCMR's project selection and approval process and its ongoing oversight of projects funded by the ENRTF, including both new projects funded during the biennium and existing projects funded in previous bienniums. Historically, LCCMR has always used less than 3% of available funds for administration. This appropriation, which represents 1.86% of the amount available for the biennium, funds LCCMR administration expenses for FY 2012-13.

**Project due to be completed:** 6/30/2013

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#### Contract Administration

Subd. 10b \$175,000 TF

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### Appropriation Language

\$88,000 the first year and \$87,000 the second year are from the trust fund to the commissioner of natural resources for expenses incurred for contract fiscal services for the agreements specified in this section. The commissioner shall provide documentation to the Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources on the expenditure of these funds. This appropriation is available until June 30, 2014.

### Project Overview

Appropriations to non-state entities must be made through a formal contract with a state entity that manages all of the funds for the project on a reimbursement basis. This appropriation to Minnesota's Department of Natural Resources (DNR) funds the expenses incurred by the DNR in contracting, contract management, and expense re-imbusement for most of the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund appropriations made to non-state entities, including both new projects funded during the biennium and existing projects funded in previous bienniums.

**Project due to be completed:** 6/30/2014

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### LCC Web Site

Subd. 10c \$3,000 TF

### Greg Hubinger

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### Appropriation Language

\$3,000 in the first year is appropriated to the Legislative Coordinating Commission for the Web site required in Minnesota Statutes, section 3.303, subdivision 10.

### Project Overview

A website called "Minnesota's Legacy" was created by the Minnesota Legislature to help citizens monitor how dollars from the Legacy Amendment and the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund are being invested in the state. This appropriation is being used by the Legislative Coordinating Commission to assist with the administration of the website.

**Project due to be completed:** 6/30/2013