

2005 Project Abstract

For the Period Ending June 30, 2008

PROJECT TITLE: Metro Conservation Corridors – Phase II DNR- Metro Greenways (2.6 & 3.4)

PROJECT MANAGER: Marybeth Block

AFFILIATION: DNR, Central Region

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FUNDING SOURCE:

LEGAL CITATION: 2005, 1st Spec. Sess., Chap. 1, Art. 2, Sec. 11, Subd. 5b.

APPROPRIATION AMOUNT: \$1,200,000

1st Year appropriation: \$590,000

2nd Year appropriation \$ 610,000

Overall Project Outcome and Results: The DNR Metro Greenways mission is to *protect, connect and restore* a regional network of significant natural areas in the growth corridor of the state. The program's goals are accomplished by supporting local governments' conservation efforts with matching grants, while insuring each individual effort contributes to the regional network concept.

During this program period, eligible applicants nominated 33 projects requested over \$9 million dollars to restore regionally important habitats. An advisory committee rated the project proposals and made funding recommendations that were approved by the DNR Commissioner.

\$170,651 was awarded to 13 projects to restore 376 acres to native plant communities on mostly public land. Many of these projects involved converting cropland to native vegetation, while others worked to remove non-native invasive species such as buckthorn. The total cost of the restoration work by all projects was \$486,652.

\$1,029,349 was awarded to six projects that, when combined with other funding partners, acquired a total of 1,125 acres. Metro Greenways protects natural habitats through direct acquisition or by purchasing a conservation easement from landowners to protect certain attributes such as open space, rare and endangered species or critical habitat. During this program period, three conservation easements were acquired - two provide a buffer for Wild River State Park and the third buffers the Carlos Avery Wildlife Management Area. Elk River purchased a high quality oak forest to add land to a city park and greenway corridor. Finally, a parcel with high quality mixed hardwoods, wetland and lakeshore was purchased in conjunction with the establishment of East Rush Lake Wildlife Management Area established in Chisago County. Metro Greenways funded approximately one-quarter of the total cost of the acquisition projects, which totaled over \$3.8 million dollars.

Project Results Use and Dissemination

The Metro Greenways, in collaboration with the Metro Conservation Corridors Partnership, produced and distributed a map depicting the focus areas of the partnership and an informational brochure about the partners and the types of projects funded through the partnership's efforts. Meetings were convened throughout the project area with various local government staff and officials charged with managing natural resources and implementing land use practices and regulations. In addition, press releases were sent to local newspapers where restoration or acquisition projects were funded. All DNR Metro Greenways-generated news releases cited the required MN Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund attribution language.

LCMR 2005 Final Work Program Report

Date of Report: August 15, 2008
Date of Work program Approval: June 14, 2005
Project Completion Date: June 30, 2008

I. PROJECT TITLE: Metro Conservation Corridors – Phase II
DNR- Metro Greenways (2.6 & 3.4)

Project Manager: Marybeth Block
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Location: Within mapped Focus Areas and within the counties of Anoka, Carver, Chisago, Dakota, Hennepin, Isanti, Ramsey, Scott, Sherburne, and Washington (**Figure 1**).

Total Biennial LCMR Project Budget:	LCMR Appropriation:	\$1,200,000
	Amount Spent:	\$1,200,000
	Balance:	\$ 0

1st Year appropriation: \$590,000

2nd Year appropriation \$ 610,000

Explanation: \$10,000 of the 1st year appropriation for the Metro Greenways portion of the Metro Area Wildlife Corridors (MWC) project will be allocated to Forest Legacy and \$10,000 of the Forest Legacy 2nd year appropriation will be allocated back to the Metro Greenways portion of MWC project due to timing of a single Forest Legacy acquisition project. In addition, \$90,000 of Metro Greenways Result 2 funds will be shifted to Result 1 in the first year to allow the Metro Greenways restoration grants to be accelerated, then shifted back to Result 2 in the second year.

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

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

be designated: (1) as an outdoor recreation unit under Minnesota Statutes, section 86A.07; or (2) as provided in Minnesota Statutes, sections 89.018, subdivision 2, paragraph (a); 97A.101; 97A.125; 97C.001; and 97C.011. The commissioner may similarly designate any lands acquired in less than fee title. This appropriation is available until June 30, 2008, at which time the project must be completed and final products delivered, unless an earlier date is specified in the work program.

II. and III. Final Project Summary

The DNR Metro Greenways mission is to **protect, connect and restore** a regional network of significant natural areas in the growth corridor of the state. The program's goals are accomplished by supporting local governments' conservation efforts with matching grants, while insuring each individual effort contributes to the regional network concept.

During this program period, eligible applicants nominated 33 projects requested over \$9 million dollars to restore regionally important habitats. An advisory committee rated the project proposals and made funding recommendations that were approved by the DNR Commissioner.

\$170,651 was awarded to 13 projects to restore 376 acres to native plant communities on mostly public land. Many of these projects involved converting cropland to native vegetation, while others worked to remove non-native invasive species such as buckthorn. The total cost of the restoration work by all projects was \$486,652.

\$1,029,349 was awarded to six projects that, when combined with other funding partners, acquired a total of 1,125 acres. Metro Greenways protects natural habitats through direct acquisition or by purchasing a conservation easement from landowners to protect certain attributes such as open space, rare and endangered species or critical habitat. During this program period, three conservation easements were acquired - two provide a buffer for Wild River State Park and the third buffers the Carlos Avery Wildlife Management Area. Elk River purchased a high quality oak forest to add land to a city park and greenway corridor. Finally, a parcel with high quality mixed hardwoods, wetland and lakeshore was purchased in conjunction with the establishment of East Rush Lake Wildlife Management Area established in Chisago County. Metro Greenways funded approximately one-quarter of the total cost of the acquisition projects, which totaled over \$3.8 million dollars.

IV. OUTLINE OF PROJECT RESULTS

Result 1: Restore and Enhance Significant Habitat

Final Report Summary: DNR Metro Greenways solicited projects through an open process and received 15 applications requesting \$739,000 to complete ecological restoration projects. The Metro Greenways Advisory Committee ranked and scored the applications according to the criteria distributed with the request for proposals. 13 grants totaling \$180,000 were awarded to seven local governments and six non-profit organizations to restore 376 acres in the Metro Conservation Corridors (MeCC) focus areas. All projects provided at least a 50 percent match with the total project costs exceeding the \$412,652 predicted in the project applications.

Project managers reported the removal of non-native, exotic species on 223 acres. Most of these efforts focused on removing buckthorn, but honeysuckle, box elder, reed canary grass and spotted knapweed were also target species. The City of Woodbury teamed up with St. Paul and sent the harvested and chipped biomass to the city's incinerary to produce energy. Three projects (Silver Creek, Kingston and Belwin) worked with private property owners to remove invasive plants on sensitive areas and teach the landowners long-term management

strategies. The Dodge Nature Center was able to restore more acres than originally projected utilizing volunteers, and the Hastings Sand Coulee project (led by the Friends of the Mississippi) partnered with the Hastings High School to control spotted knapweed. The high school teacher secured additional grant funds to employ biological control to combat this aggressive species. All of the projects reported their efforts as successful, although the eradication of reed canary grass appeared to be more costly and more difficult than anticipated in the project applications.

The project managers also reported 153 acres were planted to restore lands to woodland, savanna, wetland and prairie. (Some of these plantings were on the lands that had non-native species removed.) The Hastings Sand Coulee projects used some of the volunteers to collect seeds from the site to augment the seed and seedlings planted on the site. The Science Museum of Minnesota's St. Croix Greenway Sand Prairie project included a study focused on maximizing floristic diversity on the restored acres. The planting area was divided into 26 study areas to evaluate which grass-to-forb composition ratios provide the greatest diversity for the least cost.

Four projects came in under their projected budget resulting in a \$9,349.20 balance. To facilitate closing out the funding for this project the balance was transferred to Result 2 and used to partially fund the acquisition of the Pilot Knob Phase II project, which was awarded a grant under the MeCC DNR Metro Greenways Phase 3 Work Program.

Summary Budget Information for Result 1:

LCMR Budget:	\$ 180,000
Amount Spent:	\$ 170,651
Amount transferred	\$ 9,349
Balance:	\$ 0

Specific information on each of the projects follows:

Project Name	Location	Total Cost or Value \$	MG Funding	Reimbursed \$	Total Acres	Project results
Dodge NC - Marie Property	West St. Paul, Dakota County	\$27,000	\$5,000	\$5,000	15	15 acres of oak woodland restored by DNC and volunteers, primarily by removing buckthorn. Dodge Nature Center is property holder.
Silver Creek (Fairy Pond)	Stillwater Twmsp., Washington Cty.	\$30,000	\$15,000	\$15,000	17.2	17.2 acres was restored: bank re-vegetation, prairie restoration, invasive species removal/mgmt., and reforestation. Private landowners are the property holders.
Fish Lake Greenway	Woodbury, Washington Cty.	\$64,751	\$15,000	\$15,000	28	24 acres have been treated, burned, and seeded and 4 acres of wetland was treated with herbicide to control reed canary grass. The property holder is the City of Woodbury.
Hastings River Flats Park	Hastings, Dakota County	\$15,242	\$5,000	\$5,000	62	500+ prairie plants installed on 700 sf, 2 acres of wet meadow weeded, 25 vegetated mats installed on 2 acres of shoreline, 30 acres of prairie restored and burned, and buckthorn cut and treated in 3 acres of floodplain forest. Property holder is City of Hastings.
Project Name	Location	Total Cost	MG	Reimbursed	Total	Project results

		or Value \$	Funding	\$	Acres	
Hastings Sand Coulee	Hastings, Dakota County	\$29,400	\$15,000	\$13,910	25	25 acres sand prairie restored: exotic species removed using herbicide, hand-pulling & biological controls. Seed was collected and broadcasted. 2 acres of woodland were burned and 3 acres of prairie was burned. FMR monitored site conditions. Property is held by the City of Hastings.
Henry Woods	Hassan Twntp., Hennepin County	\$33,000	\$15,000	\$12,600	13	13 acres of big woods were restored: 50 oak seedlings installed, spot spraying of reed canary grass, and 650 native plants installed. Hassan Township is the property holder.
Kingston Property	Washington Cty SWCD.	\$30,850	\$15,000	\$15,000	25	25 acres of land has been restored: 2.7 acres of prairie burned, 25 acres managed for buckthorn, and 6 acres of woodland and old-field seeded with natives. Jeanne Kingston is the property holder.
Lake Minnewashta Reg. Park	Chanhassen, Carver County	\$45,500	\$20,000	\$14,154	12	12 acres of land has been restored to a Big Woods native plant community through removal of nonnative invasive species and replanting with native plant material. Property holder is Carver County.
Lebanon Hills Reg. Park	Eagan, Dakota County	\$44,750	\$20,000	\$20,000	25	25 acres of land at Lebanon Hills Regional Park have been restored to savanna: using herbicide, mowing, burning, seeding, planting. Property holder is Dakota County.
St. Croix Grnwy. Sand Prairie	May Twntp., Washington Cty.	\$28,281	\$10,000	\$10,000	4	4 acres of high quality prairie were reconstructed incorporating over 70 local ecotype plant species planting techniques were assessed to determine which methods create the maximum floristic diversity for the least amount of cost. Property owner is the Science Museum of Minnesota.
Vegsund County Park	Stanchfield Twntp., Isanti Cty.	\$29,838	\$15,000	\$15,000	30	30 acres were restored: buckthorn control, timber stand improvement. Property is held by Isanti County.
Wilder Forest	May Twntp., Washington Cty.	\$38,040	\$15,000	\$15,000	90	90 acres of oak forest have been restored: invasive species removal and treatment, local ecotype seed collected and planted throughout 15 acres of sparsely vegetated forest areas. The Amherst Wilder Foundation holds property.
Belwin Foundation		\$70,000	\$15,000	\$15,000	30	Removing invasive species, principally buckthorn, restored 30 acres of degraded oak savanna. Much of the site had to be cleared by hand because of the steep slopes.

Correction (\$13) Account correction

TOTALS \$486,652 \$180,000 \$170,651 376

Completion Date: June 30, 2008

Result 2: Acquire Significant Habitat

Final Report Summary: Projects were solicited through an open process and 18 applications were submitted requesting \$8,275,000 dollars to protect ecologically important habitats. The Metro Greenways Advisory Committee ranked and scored the applications according to the criteria distributed with the request for proposals. DNR Metro Greenways awarded six grants to protect a total of 1,125 acres in the MeCC focus areas.

The City of Elk River acquired a 78 acre parcel of dry oak forest between two existing park parcels. Combined, the parcels form a 330 acre park, greenway and trail corridor. The City provided over 50 percent of the funds for this purchase, and DNR Scenic and Natural Area Program also granted funds to the project.

Private landowners granted two conservation easements to the Minnesota Land Trust to buffer Wild River State Park. Buffer 1 encompasses 80 acres and buffer 2 protects 140 acres. Both landowners sold the easements well below market value resulting in substantial donations.

The DNR Metro Greenways was granted a conservation easement from the Wildlife Science Center (a non-profit organization) to protect 153 acres adjacent to the Carlos Avery Wildlife Management Unit. The area protected is an important upland and wetland connection between the WMA and Camp Salie Anoka County Park. Much of the site has outstanding, diverse natural communities. DNR Metro Greenways funded 69 percent of the project, with the remaining funding provided by the Reinvest in Minnesota Matching Funds. A management plan was prepared for the area by staff of Carlos Avery WMA and the staff will also implement the plan. To secure and record this easement DNR and Attorney General professional and technical services were incurred.

Metro Greenways contributed to the establishment East Rush Lake Wildlife Management Area that protects high quality hardwoods, wetlands and lakeshore. Metro Greenways and Trust for Public Land each contributed about 20 percent of the purchase price, with the remaining 60 percent covered by DNR Division of Wildlife.

Finally, to facilitate closing out this program period approximately 20 percent of a project (Pilot Knob Phase II) awarded a grant under the 2007 MeCC Metro Greenways Phase 3 program period was paid from this allocation (\$55,487.10 of the \$200,000.)

Summary Budget Information for Result 3:	LCMR Budget:	\$1,020,000
	Amount Transferred:	\$ 9,349
	Amount Available:	\$1,029,349
	Amount Spent:	\$1,029,349
	Balance::	\$0

Specific information on each of the projects follows:

Project Name	Location	Description	Total Cost or Value \$	MG Funding	Total Acres	Other funding partners
Top of the World Park Addition	Elk River, Sherburne County	Acquired August 2006. High quality oak forest to be acquired by City as open space/passive park. MG funds will be granted to City	1,755,000	300,000	78	City of Elk River \$555,000; DNR Remediation \$500,000, LAWCON 400,000
East Rush Lake WMA/AMA	Nessel Twsp, Chisago County	February 2006 acquisition of parcel with high quality mixed hardwoods, wetland and lakeshore for new WMA/AMA	503,000	100,000	670	TPL \$100,000, \$303,000 DNR Division of Wildlife.
Wild River State Park Buffer I (Hanson)	Sunrise Twsp, Chisago County	Conservation easement acquired by MLT in Jan. 2007 on privately owned high quality forested property adjacent to Wild River State Park	270,000	200,000	80	Landowner donation of \$70,000
Wild River State Park Buffer II (Hultquist)	Amador Twsp, Chisago County	Conservation easement by MLT on private parcel adjacent to Wild River State Park	543,000	57,925	140	Landowner donation of \$485,075
Wildlife Science Center/ Carlos Avery Buffer	Linwood Twsp, Anoka County	Conservation easement acquired by DNR MG Jan. 2007 on private parcel adjacent to Carlos Avery containing a variety of CBS mapped natural communities	570,000	300,000	153	DNR Rim Matching funds \$135,000, landowner donation of \$135,000
P&Tech Services	DNR Lands and Minerals and AG	To secure and record the conservation easement held by DNR Metro Greenways	n/a	15,937.10	n/a	
Pilot Knob Phase II	City of Mendota Heights, Dakota County	Entire 15-acre parcel acquired in Jan. 2008. 73% funded in Phase 3 (2007). 27% funded in this program period to close out the program.	509,760	55,487.10	3.45	City of Mendota Heights, Dakota County and Trust for Public Land all funding partners.
TOTAL			\$3,824,760	\$1,029,349	1125	

V. TOTAL LCMR PROJECT BUDGET

All Results: Personnel: \$ 0

All Results: Equipment: \$ 0

All Results: Development (Restoration): \$170,651

All Results: Acquisition: \$1,029,349

All Results: Other: \$ 0

TOTAL LCMR PROJECT BUDGET: \$1,200,000

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

VI. OTHER FUNDS & PARTNERS:

A. Project Partners: See Table 1 for MWC Partners. In addition, Metro Greenways will be working with numerous additional organizations through the Advisory Committee and as grant recipients and project cooperators. Major groups who have submitted preliminary project ideas and others with whom we expect to work include:

- Metropolitan Council
- Anoka Conservation District, Dakota SWCD, and other SWCD's
- Dakota County, Anoka Co. Parks & Recreation, Ramsey Co Parks, and other county units
- Watershed Districts & Water Management Organizations, e.g. SWCD, Rice Creek Watershed District, Carnelian-Marine WD
- Minnesota Pollution Control Agency

B. Other Funds being spent during the Project Period:

All 2005 and 2006 bonding has been put toward projects as of this update. The DNR budget proposal also has about \$189,000 in general funds for Metro Greenways for operating costs including Regional Operations staff (for MeCC/MG oversight, budget management, GIS assistance, technical assistance, etc.) Furthermore, the restoration grants should leverage more than \$300,000 from grantees (including local and regional park funding) and the acquisition projects are expected to leverage approximately \$2.8 million (including donated lands/easements, local, other state, and federal funding contributions).

C. Required Match (if applicable): NA

D. Past Spending: In the past 5 years, Metro Greenways has received the following direct appropriations:

- Metro Greenways – 2000 Bonding: \$1,500,000 appropriation
- Metro Greenways – 2001 LCMR: \$2,730,000 appropriation
- Metro Greenways – 2003 LCMR/Phase1 MWC: \$1,089,000 appropriation
- Metro Greenways – 2005 Bonding: \$0.5 million appropriation
- Metro Greenways – 2005 LCMR: \$1 million appropriation

Between 1998-2002, the DNR allocated about \$200,000 in general funds each year for Metro Greenways staff (2.5 FTE) and operating costs. Also, since inception of the program, over \$3 of non-state funds for every state dollar has been directly leveraged towards the projects funded by Metro Greenways.

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

VII. DISSEMINATION: Metro Corridors will periodically distribute information about the program through the widely broadcasted emails to people on the Regional Greenways Collaborative (RGC) database, through the RGC quarterly meetings, and jointly held county meetings. As projects are completed, Metro greenways will publicize accomplishments through press releases, organization newsletters and websites, etc.

VIII. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS: Periodic work program progress reports were submitted in February and August each year. This final work program report is being submitted by August 15,, 2008.

IX. RESEARCH PROJECTS: NA

Attachment A: FINAL REPORT Budget Detail for 2005 Metro Corridors Project - Date: 8/15/08
 Project Title: Metro Greenways

Project Manager Name: Marybeth Block
 LCMR Dollars: \$1,200,000

BUDGET ITEM	Result 1: Restoration			Result 2: Acquisition			TOTAL			Comments
	Amount Budgeted (\$)	Amount Spent (\$)	Balance (\$)	Amount Budgeted (\$)	Amount Spent (\$)	Balance (\$)	Amount Budgeted (\$)	Amount Spent (\$)	Balance (\$)	
DEVELOPMENT										
Land improvement	\$ 180,000	\$ 170,651	\$ 9,349				\$180,000	\$170,651	\$9,349	restoration grants and signage
DEVELOPMENT - SUBTOTAL	\$ 180,000		\$ 9,349	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -		\$0	\$9,349	balance transferred to acquisition
ACQUISITION										
Land acquisition (fee title & conservation easement)			\$ -	\$ 1,020,000	\$ 1,013,412	\$ 6,588	\$1,020,000	\$1,013,412	\$6,588	for fee title and conservation easement acquisitions
Land transaction costs (e.g. survey, title, appraisal, environmental, & legal)			\$ -	\$ -	\$ 15,937	\$ (15,937)	\$0	\$15,937	-\$15,937	Professional and technical services associated easement acquisition
ACQUISITION - SUBTOTAL	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,020,000	\$ 1,029,349	\$ (9,349)	\$1,020,000	\$1,029,349	-\$9,349	
OTHER										
Travel expenses in Minnesota			\$ -				\$0	\$0	\$0	
OTHER - SUBTOTAL	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$0	\$0	\$0	
TOTAL LCMR Funding	\$ 180,000	\$ 170,651	\$ 9,349	\$ 1,020,000	\$ 1,029,349	\$ -	\$1,200,000	\$1,200,000	\$0	