

**Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund (ENRTF)
2010 Work Program**

Date of Report: December 16, 2009
Date of Next Progress Report: December 30, 2010
Date of Work Program Approval:
Project Completion Date: June 30, 2012

I. PROJECT TITLE: Integrated, Operational Bird Conservation Plan for Minnesota

Project Manager: Lee A. Pfannmuller
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Location: Statewide

Total ENRTF Project Budget:	ENRTF Appropriation	\$	151,000
	Minus Amount Spent:	\$	0
	Equal Balance:	\$	151,000

Legal Citation: M.L. 2010, Chp. 362, Sec. 2, Subd. 3d

Appropriation Language:

\$151,000 is from the trust fund to the commissioner of natural resources for an agreement with Audubon Minnesota to develop an integrated bird conservation plan targeting priority species and providing a framework for implementing coordinated, focused, and effective bird conservation throughout Minnesota.

II. PROJECT SUMMARY AND RESULTS:

There are many national, regional, and state conservation plans that broadly address Minnesota birds, but a consolidated and focused state conservation agenda does not exist. The goal of this project is to develop a common bird conservation agenda for Minnesota NGOs, agencies, and citizens by creating one clear *operational plan that provides specific guidance for Minnesota bird conservation*. The operational plan will build upon existing efforts and employ an inclusive, consensus-based planning process to: 1) synthesize bird priorities from existing conservation plans with the involvement of agency personnel, academics, NGO staff, and citizens; 2) conduct a peer-review of draft findings and present them at six workshops statewide to solicit feedback; and 3) use the plan's framework to delineate conservation actions for Audubon to implement at the state and local level by working with Audubon chapters and other resource agency and conservation partners. The specific outcomes will include: 1) establishing clear priorities that guide conservation actions at the local level for the coming 5-10 years; 2) developing a toolbox of actions that will produce concrete conservation outcomes; 3) localizing the information to make recommendations relevant to Minnesota's ecological regions; 4) making the information accessible and understandable for implementation by local conservation organizations, resource professionals and interested citizens; and 5) developing three Important Bird Area management plans that incorporate the plan's conservation actions. The end result will be a conservation blueprint that identifies and begins implementing the most strategic and effective conservation actions for Minnesota's priority bird species.

III. PROGRESS SUMMARY AS OF:

IV. OUTLINE OF PROJECT RESULTS:

RESULT/ACTIVITY 1: A draft Minnesota Bird Conservation Plan identifying prioritized bird species for conservation and practical conservation strategies for each species.

Description: Work will begin by identifying, reviewing and evaluating a wide array of long-range and strategic plans that address the conservation of Minnesota birds and their habitats. The effort will include a review of national plans under the umbrella of the North American Bird Conservation Initiative (such as the U.S. Shorebird Conservation Plan and the North American Landbird Conservation Plan); relevant regional plans under the umbrella of the Partners In Flight (PIF) Initiative (such as the PIF Bird Conservation Plans for the Northern Tallgrass Prairie and the Boreal Hardwood Transition); and regional joint venture plans designed to implement elements of the North American Bird Conservation Plan (such as the Upper Mississippi River and Great Lakes Region Joint Venture Implementation Plan). Numerous state conservation and management plans also will be reviewed (such as Tomorrow's Habitat for the Wild and Rare and Minnesota's Statewide Conservation and Preservation Plan) as well as state plans for priority habitats and landscapes (such as the Minnesota Forest Resources Council's regional landscape plans and The Nature Conservancy's Landscape Action Plans). In addition, there are national plans for individual species that occur in Minnesota (such as the King Rail and Cerulean Warbler) and numerous other plans and reports that directly or indirectly address the conservation of Minnesota birds and their habitats (such as recent reports addressing birds and climate change).

Most of these plans do an excellent job of compiling resource information and assessing the status of birds and their habitats, assessing current and potential future threats, and establishing very broad programmatic goals for conservation and management. But it is challenging to determine which, among the multitude of species discussed in each plan, are really the highest priority for action and which are most likely to benefit from immediate conservation efforts.

The objective of this first year of work is to synthesize and integrate bird species and bird habitat priorities from these existing plans and to develop a draft list of priority bird species at the state level and for each of Minnesota's ecological subsections. The emphasis is not to repeat work that has already been done, resulting in large lists of priority species for habitats throughout the state. Instead, the goal is to develop a short, manageable list of species that are most likely to benefit from local and statewide conservation efforts in the next 5-10 years.

Known conservation and management practices for each bird on this initial list of priority species will be synthesized and used to identify draft conservation actions at the statewide level and for each ecological subsection. Together the information will be combined to develop the first draft of the operational plan for Minnesota bird conservation.

A group of technical advisors will be established to help provide guidance throughout the duration of the project. We will consider selecting representatives from groups such as Audubon Minnesota, the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the University of Minnesota, the Nature Conservancy, the U.S. Forest Service, the National Park Service, Hawk Ridge Bird Observatory, the Minnesota Ornithologists Union, affiliate members of Bird Conservation Minnesota, and local Audubon Chapters.

Summary Budget Information for Result/Activity 1: ENRTF Budget:	\$68,466.00
Amount Spent:	\$ 0.00
Balance:	\$68,466.00

Deliverable/Outcome	Completion Date	Budget
1. Compile and evaluate existing bird conservation efforts	October 15, 2010	\$19,696.00
2. Develop a draft bird species priority list (statewide and by subsection)	December 15, 2010	\$11,268.00
3. Compile and synthesize habitat needs and best management practices	March 30, 2011	\$19,651.00
4. Identify draft conservation actions to implement at the statewide level and for each ecological subsection	April 30, 2011	\$ 5,764.00
5. Prepare a draft operational plan	July 1, 2011	\$12,087.00

Result Completion Date: July 1, 2011

Result Status as of December 30, 2010

Result Status as of June 30, 2011

Result Status as of December 30, 2011:

Final Report Summary: June 30, 2012

RESULT/ACTIVITY 2: Public review and revisions of draft plan to produce the final operational plan

Description: In order to solicit and incorporate even broader input into the draft Operational Bird Conservation Plan, a series of six workshops will be held throughout the state in the late summer and fall of 2011. We anticipate the general locations will be in the northeast, northwest, southeast and southwest regions of the state as well as two in central Minnesota (including one in the metropolitan area). The focus will be to solicit targeted input from known agency and university professionals, conservation groups and citizen scientists. Specifically, we will discuss how to narrow the number of priority species and how to select a menu of potential conservation and management measures that are reasonable for implementation at the local level and can result in measureable conservation outcomes. The involvement of local conservation groups, Audubon chapters, and citizen scientists will be particularly important as they are seen as the principal audience for the plan.

Following completion of the workshops, suggestions will be evaluated and, as appropriate, incorporated into a final plan that incorporates a toolbox of conservation actions. A press release will announce its' completion that can be used in other organization's newsletters and various media outlets. Copies of the final plan will be provided to participants, including the Department of Natural Resources, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, National Park Service, U.S. Forest Service, The Nature Conservancy and each Audubon Chapter. Presentations on the plan's outcomes will be made to Audubon chapters and other statewide and local conservation organizations as funds allow. We will also examine dissemination methods to other potentially interested parties such as consulting forester associations, Soil and Water Conservation Districts, Natural Resource Conservation Districts, Minnesota Naturalists, Nature Center personnel, Prairie Enthusiasts, etc. The plan will also be available on Minnesota Audubon's web page.

Summary Budget Information for Result/Activity 2: ENRTF Budget: \$44,638.00
Amount Spent: \$ 0.00
Balance: \$44,638.00

Deliverable/Outcome	Completion Date	Budget
1. Conduct 6 workshops statewide for plan review and input	October 15, 2011	\$22,126.00
2. Finalize toolbox of conservation actions to implement at the statewide level and for each ecological subsection	November 30, 2011	\$ 9,124.00
2. Prepare final state operational plan	December 30, 2011	\$ 6,081.00
3. Disseminate final plan	January 30, 2012	\$ 7,307.00

Result Completion Date: January 30, 2012

Result Status as of December 30, 2010

Result Status as of June 30, 2011

Result Status as of December 30, 2011

Final Report Summary: June 30, 2012

RESULT/ACTIVITY 3: Delineate and implement bird conservation actions

Description: This result has two primary outcomes. The first is to tailor the conservation priorities identified in the Operational Plan to specific conservation agendas for individual Audubon chapters. The focus will be on actions that chapters can reasonably implement in the coming 5-10 years by working with their members and by partnering with other local conservation interests. Where feasible, emphasis will be placed on identifying conservation priorities in Important Bird Areas that are in the vicinity of chapter locations and that provide habitat for priority species.

The second outcome is to utilize the new operational plan to guide further delineation and management of Audubon Minnesota’s Important Bird Areas. Important Bird Areas (IBA) are sites that provide essential habitat for one or more breeding, wintering and/or migrant bird species in Minnesota. The IBA Program is designed to be proactive, voluntary, participatory, and science-based and it works to identify, monitor and conserve the most essential bird habitats in the state. To date, 35 IBA sites have been officially delineated in Minnesota.

One concrete conservation outcome of this work program is to insure that these IBA sites actually do provide essential habitat for the priority species that are identified in the new operational plan. As a result, we will conduct a gap analysis of the existing IBAs to determine if they include breeding and migratory habitat for the priority species identified in the plan. Then, management plans that incorporate the conservation actions identified for each species will be developed for three IBAs located in different regions of the state. This will include workshops with private and public landowners within each IBA to solicit their input and support for specific conservation actions.

Summary Budget Information for Result/Activity 3: ENRTF Budget: \$37,896.00
Amount Spent: \$ 0.00
Balance: \$37,896.00

Deliverable/Outcome	Completion Date	Budget
At the Statewide Level:		
1. Conduct a gap analysis of existing IBAs to assess if they effectively address breeding and migratory habitat for the priority species identified in the plan	March 30, 2012	\$14,918.00
At the Local Level:		
1. Identify implementation actions for Audubon chapters	April 30, 2012	\$ 7,123.00
2. Develop three IBA management plans in different regions of the state that incorporate the plan's conservation actions	June 30, 2012	\$15,855.00

Result Completion Date: June 30, 2012

Result Status as of December 30, 2010

Result Status as of June 30, 2011

Result Status as of December 30, 2011

Final Report Summary: June 30, 2012

V. TOTAL ENRTF PROJECT BUDGET: \$151,000

Personnel: **\$ 145,510.00**

- Lee Pfannmuller, Project Manager; 30 hours/wk (est. \$131,789)
- Mark Martell, Audubon Director of Bird Conservation; 7% FTE; provides technical assistance and develops 3 IBA management plans; (est. \$10,088)
- Bonita Jenne, 5% FTE; provides editing assistance and graphic design; (est. \$2,508)
- Jenny Vitale, provides administrative support (est. \$1,125)

Travel: **\$ 3,410.00**

- In-state Mileage (est. \$2,805):
 - ✓ 6 workshops averaging 300 miles each @ \$.055/mi (\$990)
 - ✓ Miscellaneous travel for meetings and consultations averaging 100 miles/month x 24 months x \$0.55/mi (\$1320)
 - ✓ 3 IBA planning sessions of 300 miles each @\$0.55/mi (\$495)
- Lodging and Meals (est. \$605)
 - ✓ Estimate of 5 overnight lodging stays at @\$90/night and meals for 5 days at @\$31/day

Additional Budget Items: \$ 2,080.00

- Publication Access Fee (\$80: \$40 annual charge for library privileges at UM to conduct research on priority species)
- Printing and Mailing (\$2,000: \$300 to print and distribute draft copies of plan; \$1,500 to print and distribute final copies of plan; \$200 to print and distribute 3 IBA plans)

TOTAL ENRTF PROJECT BUDGET: \$ 151,000.00

Explanation of Capital Expenditures Greater Than \$3,500: Not applicable

VI. PROJECT STRATEGY:

A. Project Partners: Lee Pfannmuller will be hired as the Project Manager responsible for overall project implementation and plan development. Mark Martell, Audubon's Director of Bird Conservation, will provide assistance by guiding the preparation of the IBA management plans in cooperation with local Audubon Chapters. Technical guidance will be provided by: the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service; the DNR Nongame Wildlife Program, the Minnesota County Biological Survey, the University of Minnesota, the Minnesota Nature Conservancy, the U.S. Forest Service, the National Park Service, Hawk Ridge Bird Observatory, the affiliate members of Bird Conservation Minnesota, other members of Audubon Minnesota and local Audubon Chapters.

B. Project Impact and Long-term Strategy: Development of the conservation plan will be completed with this funding request. The plan will serve as a catalyst for state and local partners, including Audubon, to implement conservation actions outlined in the plan that may initiate additional funding requests.

C. Other Funds Proposed to be Spent during the Project Period: Not applicable

D. Spending History: No funds will be spent on this project prior to July 1, 2010.

VII. DISSEMINATION: As noted under Result #2, a variety of avenues will be used to disseminate the final Integrated Operational Bird Conservation Plan, from press releases to presentations to distribution of hard copies of the plan. The plan will also be available on the Minnesota Audubon web page at <http://mn.audubon.org/>. The final IBA management plans will be distributed to landowners within each IBA and will also be posted on the Audubon web page.

VIII. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS: Periodic work program progress reports will be submitted not later than December 30, 2010; June 30, 2011; and December 30, 2011. A final work program report and associated products will be submitted between June 30 and August 1, 2011 as requested by the LCCMR.

IX. RESEARCH PROJECTS: Not applicable

Attachment A: Budget Detail for 2010 Projects - Summary and a Budget page for each partner (if applicable)											
Project Title: An Integrated Operational Bird Conservation Plan for Minnesota											
Project Manager Name: Lee A. Pfannmuller											
Trust Fund Appropriation: \$151,000											
2010 Trust Fund Budget	Result 1 Budget:	Amount Spent 12-16-09	Balance 12- 16-09	Result 2 Budget:	Amount Spent 12-16-09	Balance 12- 16-09	Result 3 Budget:	Amount Spent 12-16-09	Balance 12-16-09	TOTAL BUDGET	TOTAL BALANCE
	Prepare a draft Minnesota Bird Conservation Plan			Review and finalize operational plan.			Delineate and implement bird conservation actions				
BUDGET ITEM											
PERSONNEL: wages and benefits <i>(List individual names, amount budgeted and %FTE; add rows as needed)</i>	\$67,466.00		\$67,466.00	\$41,360.00		\$41,360.00	\$36,684.00		\$36,684.00	\$145,510.00	\$145,510.00
Lee A. Pfannmuller (30 hr/wk): Project Manager; est. \$131,789											
Mark Martell (7%FTE): Audubon Director of Bird Conservation provides technical assistance and develops 3 IBA plans; est. 10,088											
Bonita Jenne (5%FTE): provides publication editing & graphic design; est \$2,508											
Jenny Vitale (2%FTE): provides administrative support; est. \$1,125											
Printing & Mailing: \$300 (est.) to print and mail draft conservation plan (result 1); \$1,500 (est.) to print and mail final plan (result 2); \$200 (est.) to print and mail 3 IBA plans (result 3).	\$300.00		\$300.00	\$1,500.00		\$1,500.00	\$200.00		\$200.00	\$2,000.00	\$2,000.00
Travel expenses in Minnesota:	\$660.00		\$660.00	\$1,738.00		\$1,738.00	\$1,012.00		\$1,012.00	\$3,410.00	\$3,410.00
1. Mileage: 6 workshops averaging 300 mi each @ \$0.55/mile (total est. \$990; result 2); plus other travel for meetings and consultation averaging 100 mi/month for 24 mths (total est. \$1320; \$660 result 1; \$385 result 2; \$275 result 3); plus 3 IBA planning sessions averaging 300 mi each (total est. \$495; result 3); est. total: \$2805.											
2. Lodging and Meals: estimate of 5 overnight lodging stays @ \$90/night and meals for 5 days at @\$31/day (total est. \$630; \$380 result2; \$250 result 3)											
Other: Publication Access Fee: \$40 annual charge for library privileges at UM to conduct research on priority species	\$40.00		\$40.00	\$40.00		\$40.00	\$0.00		\$0.00	\$80.00	\$80.00
COLUMN TOTAL	\$68,466.00	\$0.00	\$68,466.00	\$44,638.00	\$0.00	\$44,638.00	\$37,896.00	\$0.00	\$37,896.00	\$151,000.00	\$151,000.00

