

2011 Project Abstract

For the Period Ending June 30, 2013

PROJECT TITLE: LaSalle Lake State Recreation Area Acquisition
PROJECT MANAGER: Susan Schmidt
AFFILIATION: The Trust for Public Land
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FUNDING SOURCE: Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund
LEGAL CITATION: M.L. 2011, 1st Special Session, Chp. 2, Art.3, Sec. 2, Subd. 4f;
M.L. 2012, Chp. 264, Art.4, Subd. 4f

APPROPRIATION AMOUNT: \$1,000,000

Overall Project Outcome and Results

On October 27, 2011, The Trust for Public Land acquired 721 acres on La Salle Lake in Hubbard County and immediately conveyed the property to the DNR. Funding for approximately 94 of these acres was provided by the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund. Combined with 269 acres previously acquired on December 22, 2010, the land now forms the new La Salle Lake State Recreation Area.

Funding for the acquisition of this property was as follows:

FUNDING SOURCE	ALLOCATED ACREAGE	AMOUNT
ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES TRUST FUND	94	\$ 990,000
OUTDOOR HERITAGE FUND	528	5,547,000
PARKS & TRAILS FUND	99	1,953,000
TOTAL (purchase price and appraised value)	721	8,490,000

In addition to the land acquisition capital noted above, the following amounts were appropriated for DNR land acquisition costs, initial site development and restoration: Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund \$10,000; Outdoor Heritage Fund \$85,000; and Parks and Trails Fund \$147,000. The DNR has used these funds to conduct a number of activities on the site including restoration of areas to native species, invasive species control, trail system establishment, fencing removal, and reforestation of areas damaged by a major blowdown in 2012.

Protection of the La Salle Lake property was a high priority for multiple stakeholders. It was the number one priority for the DNR Northwest Region in 2010-2011, which had sought to protect it for over a decade. The acquisition also enjoyed strong local support including unanimous approval from the Hubbard County Board. Numerous organizations and individuals provided letters of support including: the Park Rapids Area Chamber of Commerce, the Hubbard County Coalition of Lake Associations (COLA), the Minnesota Deer Hunters Association, Trout Unlimited, and the Audubon Society.

Acquisition of the La Salle Lake property successfully seized a rare opportunity to protect a large area of habitat of regional and statewide significance that includes the entirety of Minnesota's second deepest lake, a coldwater stream, high-quality forest and wetlands, and over a half mile of Mississippi River shoreline. The property is ranked as having Outstanding Biodiversity Significance by the Minnesota County Biological Survey (MCBS). It also provides excellent recreational opportunities for hunting, fishing, hiking, camping and wildlife observation. The acquisition furthers the goals of multiple state conservation plans and connects large parcels of land already in public ownership preventing forest fragmentation and guaranteeing wildlife large landscapes in which to roam. This unique and important habitat was at risk of development and was listed for sale until The Trust for Public Land obtained an option to purchase the property and ultimately conveyed it to the DNR for permanent stewardship.

Project Results Use and Dissemination

Information about this project has been widely disseminated in a variety of ways. The Trust for Public Land has publicized it on its website, <http://www.tpl.org/what-we-do/where-we-work/minnesota/la-salle-lake.html>, in broadcast emails to its list serve members, and in other Trust for Public Land publications. The DNR issued a press release on the acquisition, which many news providers covered including the Pioneer Press, MPR, the Park Rapids Enterprise and a number of other papers through the AP wire. Television coverage was provided by Channel 9 TV and Channel 11 TV. The DNR further did a story on this project in its Conservation Volunteer magazine, and has a great deal of information about it on its website. See the following link: http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/state_parks/la_salle_lake/index.html



**Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund
(ENRTF)
M.L. 2011 Work Plan Final Report**

Date of Status Update: 1/24/2014
Date of Next Status Update: Final Report
Date of Work Plan Approval: 6/23/2011
Project Completion Date: 6/30/2014

Is this an amendment request? No

Project Title: LaSalle Lake State Recreation Area Acquisition

Project Manager: Susan Schmidt
Affiliation: The Trust for Public Land
Address: 2610 University Ave W, Ste 300
City: St Paul **State:** MN **Zipcode:** 55114

Telephone Number: (651) 999-5317
Email Address: susan.schmidt@tpl.org
Web Address: <http://www.tpl.org/minnesota>

Location:

Counties Impacted: Hubbard
Ecological Section Impacted: Northern Minnesota Drift and lake Plains (212N)

Total ENRTF Project Budget:	ENRTF Appropriation \$:	1,000,000
	Amount Spent \$:	1,000,000
	Balance \$:	0

Legal Citation: M.L. 2011, First Special Session, Chp. 2, Art.3, Sec. 2, Subd. 4f

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.

Legal Citation: M.L. 2012, Chp. 264, Art.4, Subd. 4f

Appropriation Language:

\$1,000,000 the first year and ~~\$1,000,000 the second year~~ are is from the trust fund to the commissioner of natural resources for an agreement with The Trust for Public Land to acquire ~~approximately 190 acres~~ land to be designated as a state recreation area as provided in Minnesota Statutes, section 86A.05, subdivision 3, on La Salle 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.

Legislative Note: In the 2011 legislative session, the legislature appropriated funding for this project from the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund (ENRTF) in the amount of \$2,000,000, with \$1,000,000 available the first year of the biennium and \$1,000,000 available the second year. In the same session, it appropriated funding in the amount of \$4,632,000 from the Outdoor Heritage Fund (OHF) for this project available in the first year of the biennium. In the 2012 legislative session, the legislature removed the \$1,000,000 of ENRTF funding in the second year of the biennium for this project, but added \$1,000,000 of OHF funding for this project in the second year of the biennium.

I. PROJECT TITLE: La Salle Lake State Recreation Area Acquisition

II. FINAL PROJECT STATEMENT:

On October 27, 2011, The Trust for Public Land acquired 721 acres on La Salle Lake in Hubbard County and immediately conveyed the property to the DNR. Funding for approximately 94 of these acres was provided by the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund. Combined with 269 acres previously acquired on December 22, 2010, the land now forms the new La Salle Lake State Recreation Area.

Funding for the acquisition of this property was as follows:

FUNDING SOURCE	ALLOCATED ACREAGE	AMOUNT
ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES TRUST FUND	94	\$ 990,000
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PARKS & TRAILS FUND	99	1,953,000
TOTAL (purchase price and appraised value)	721	8,490,000

In addition to the land acquisition capital noted above, the following amounts were appropriated for DNR land acquisition costs, initial site development and restoration: ENRTF \$10,000; OHF \$85,000; and Parks and Trails Fund \$147,000. The DNR has used these funds to conduct a number of activities on the site including restoration of areas to native species, invasive species control, trail system establishment, fencing removal, and reforestation of areas damaged by a major blowdown in 2012.

Protection of the La Salle Lake property was a high priority for multiple stakeholders. It was the number one priority for the DNR Northwest Region in 2010-2011, which had

sought to protect it for over a decade. The acquisition also enjoyed strong local support including unanimous approval from the Hubbard County Board. Numerous organizations and individuals provided letters of support including: the Park Rapids Area Chamber of Commerce, the Hubbard County Coalition of Lake Associations (COLA), the Minnesota Deer Hunters Association, Trout Unlimited, and the Audubon Society.

Acquisition of the La Salle Lake property successfully seized a rare opportunity to protect a large area of habitat of regional and statewide significance that includes the entirety of Minnesota’s second deepest lake, a coldwater stream, high-quality forest and wetlands, and over a half mile of Mississippi River shoreline. The property is ranked as having Outstanding Biodiversity Significance by the Minnesota County Biological Survey (MCBS). It also provides excellent recreational opportunities for hunting, fishing, hiking, camping and wildlife observation. The acquisition furthers the goals of multiple state conservation plans and connects large parcels of land already in public ownership preventing forest fragmentation and guaranteeing wildlife large landscapes in which to roam. This unique and important habitat was at risk of development and was listed for sale until The Trust for Public Land obtained an option to purchase the property and ultimately conveyed it to the DNR for permanent stewardship.

III. PROJECT STATUS UPDATES:

Project Status as of December 2011: On October 27, 2011, TPL acquired the 721-acre La Salle Lake property and immediately conveyed it to the DNR. Funding for approximately 94 of these acres was provided by ENRTF. The land is now open to the public as a new state recreation area. The DNR is currently going through a planning process with public involvement to determine exactly how the land will be used and managed.

IV. OUTLINE OF PROJECT RESULTS:

ACTIVITY 1: Acquisition

Description: Acquire fee-title to permanently protect 95 acres of SNA quality habitat that provides multiple benefits for conservation. ENRTF will provide funding for 190 acres of the 721 acres Phase II property. The DNR has a copy of the appraisal that valued this highly developable lakeshore property at \$10,500 per acre.

Summary Budget Information for Activity 1:

ENRTF \$1,000,000
Budget:
Amount
Spent: \$1,000,000
Balance: \$0

Activity Completion Date:

Outcome	Completion Date	Budget
1. Acquire 94 acres in fee-title and transfer to the MN DNR	July 15, 2012	\$ 1,000,000

Activity Status as of December 2011: On October 27, 2011, TPL acquired the 721-acre La Salle Lake property and immediately conveyed it to the DNR. Funding for

approximately 94 of these acres was provided by ENRTF. The land is now open to the public as a new state recreation area. The DNR is currently going through a planning process with public involvement to determine exactly how the land will be used and managed. It is anticipated that the planning process will be completed this spring (2012). The plan will include information about restoration activities and funding, as well as operations and maintenance costs. See the DNR's website for more information: <http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/input/mgmtplans/parks/lasalle.html>.

Funding for the acquisition of this property was as follows:

FUNDING SOURCE	ALLOCATED ACREAGE	AMOUNT
ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES TRUST FUND	94	\$ 990,000
OUTDOOR HERITAGE FUND	528	5,547,000
PARKS & TRAILS FUND	99	1,953,000
TOTAL (purchase price and appraised value)	721	8,490,000

In addition to the land acquisition capital noted above, the following amounts were appropriated for DNR land acquisition costs, initial site development and restoration: ENRTF \$10,000; OHF \$85,000; and Parks and Trails Fund \$147,000.

A final report will be filed after the required planning processes are completed and all costs have been determined.

Final Report Summary:

The DNR has completed its planning process and details are available on its website: <http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/input/mgmtplans/parks/lasalle.html>. The majority of the DNR's restoration activities with this funding have been completed. The final restoration activities will be completed by June 30, 2014 and will involve pine plantings in areas that were affected by a major blowdown that occurred in July of 2012. A land acquisition report was submitted on 11-22-11 and a transaction cost report was submitted on 10-12-12.

This newest State Recreation Area has now operated successfully for two seasons and is used and enjoyed by many people. The DNR is currently working on further visitor services, interpretation and day use area development.

V. DISSEMINATION:

Description: Once this transaction is completed, The Trust for Public Land will disseminate information on the TPL website, www.tpl.org, broadcast emails to TPL list serve members, distribute press releases, and include information in TPL's newsletters and publications as appropriate. TPL will also work with the DNR to ensure information is distributed to its listserves and on its website as well.

Status as of December 2011:

This project has received a fair amount of attention in the press. Links to a sampling of online and newspaper articles are given below. There has also been coverage on MPR radio, Channel 9 TV and Channel 11 TV.

Pioneer Press:

http://www.twincities.com/ci_19216523

MPR:

<http://minnesota.publicradio.org/display/web/2011/10/28/la-salle-lake-land-in-northern-minnesota-opens-to-the-public/>

Park Rapids:

<http://www.parkrapidsenterprise.com/event/article/id/30249/>

The Republic, Columbus Indiana (AP)

<http://www.therepublic.com/view/story/dc17e0936673412faff7ec75303f2be5/MN--New-Minnesota-Park/>

CBS Minnesota (AP):

<http://minnesota.cbslocal.com/2011/10/29/state-opens-new-recreation-area-near-bemidji/>

Grand Forks (AP):

<http://www.grandforksherald.com/event/article/id/219784/group/Sports/>

The DNR has also posted a great deal of information about La Salle on its website:

DNR PRESS RELEASE:

<http://news.dnr.state.mn.us/2011/10/28/la-salle-lake-state-recreation-area-acquired/>

DNR: LA SALLE SRA:

http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/state_parks/la_salle_lake/index.html

DNR: LA SALLE SNA:

<http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/snassna/sna02056/index.html>

TPL has also described La Salle on its website:

<http://www.tpl.org/what-we-do/where-we-work/minnesota/la-salle-lake.html>

Final Report Summary:

As indicated above, there have been a variety of press pieces about La Salle Lake State Recreation Area. The DNR has a great deal of information about this resource on its website: http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/state_parks/la_salle_lake/index.html. The Trust for Public Land also highlights this project on its website: <http://www.tpl.org/our-work/land-and-water/la-salle-lake>.

VI. PROJECT BUDGET SUMMARY:

A. ENRTF Budget:

Budget Category	\$ Amount	Explanation
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Fee Title Acquisition:	\$ 990,000	Acquisition capital
Professional Services for Acq:	\$ 10,000	DNR land acquisition costs and initial site development
TOTAL ENRTF BUDGET:	\$ 1,000,000	

Explanation of Use of Classified Staff: N/A.

Explanation of Capital Expenditures Greater Than \$3,500: N/A.

Number of Full-time Equivalent (FTE) funded with this ENRTF appropriation: N/A.

Number of Full-time Equivalent (FTE) estimated to be funded through contracts with this ENRTF appropriation: N/A.

B. Other Funds:

Source of Funds	\$ Amount Proposed	\$ Amount Spent	Use of Other Funds
State			
Outdoor Heritage Fund	\$ 5,632,000	\$5,632,000	Acquisition capital, acquisition costs, initial site development and restoration.
Parks and Trails Fund	\$ 2,100,000	\$2,100,000	Acquisition capital, acquisition costs, initial site development and restoration.
TOTAL OTHER FUNDS:	\$ 7,732,000	\$7,732,000	

VII. PROJECT STRATEGY:

A. Project Partners:

The Trust for Public Land (TPL) will be facilitating the fee-title acquisition and assisting the Minnesota DNR in development of management plans. TPL has a proven track record of successful management of complex and time-sensitive real estate projects. Because of the immediacy of this rare real estate opportunity, TPL has offered to help and the Minnesota DNR has encouraged the partnership. The Minnesota DNR will be the final fee-title holder and will be developing and implementing the management plans for the site. This project will have many other partners throughout the process including the landowner, local governments, educational institutions, environmental non-profits, local businesses and local sportsman groups.

B. Project Impact and Long-term Strategy:

La Salle Lake State Recreational Area will provide nearly one thousand acres of rare habitat and unique terrain for Minnesotans and other visitors to enjoy for generations to come. The La Salle Lake property will provide a connection to the Itasca State Forest, the Mississippi Headwaters State Forest as well as other publicly owned lands surrounding the property. An innovative DNR multiple-division Management and Recreational Use Plan is being developed and will be implemented once the property is acquired. An Operations and Maintenance Plan that identifies potential future sources of funding will also be developed to ensure La Salle Lake will be a well-managed, viable resource for Minnesota.

C. Spending History: Funding for the Phase I La Salle Lake acquisition, which closed in December 2010, consisted of \$585,000 of 2010 Outdoor Heritage Fund, \$337,299.80 RIM, and \$17,700.20 Lakeshore Lease (SNA).

VIII. ACQUISITION/RESTORATION LIST: See attached list.

IX. MAP(S): See attached maps.

X. RESEARCH ADDENDUM: N/A.

XI. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS:

Periodic work plan status update reports will be submitted not later than December 2011, July 2012, and December 2012. A final report and associated products will be submitted between June 30 and August 1, 2013 as requested by the LCCMR.

FINAL Attachment A: Budget Detail for M.L. 2011 (FY 2012-13) Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund Projects					
Project Title: La Salle Lake State Recreation Area Acquisition					
Legal Citation: M.L. 2011, First Special Session, Chp. 2, Art.3, Sec. 2, Subd. 04f; M.L. 2012, Chp. 264, Art.4, Subd. 4f					
Project Manager: Susan Schmidt					
M.L. 2011, M.L 2012 (FY 2012-13) ENRTF Appropriation: \$ 1,000,000					
Project Length and Completion Date: July 15, 2012					
Date of Update: 1-24-14					
ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES TRUST FUND BUDGET	Activity 1 Budget	Amount Spent	Balance	TOTAL BUDGET	TOTAL BALANCE
BUDGET ITEM	Acquisition				
Fee Title Acquisition	990,000	990,000	0	990,000	0
Professional Services for Acquisition: DNR land acquisition costs and initial site development	10,000	10,000	0	10,000	0
COLUMN TOTAL	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000	\$0	\$1,000,000	\$0

LA SALLE LAKE







