



LEGISLATIVE-CITIZEN COMMISSION ON MINNESOTA RESOURCES

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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\$53.7 million recommended for 68 projects to benefit water, wildlife, and outdoor experiences across Minnesota

Funds would come from the MN Lottery-supported Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund

(St. Paul, MN, December 17, 2018) – The Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources (LCCMR) recently voted to recommend 68 environment and natural resources projects totaling \$53.7 million to the 2019 Minnesota Legislature for funding. The recommendations are the result of a competitive, multi-stage process for allocating funds from the Minnesota Lottery-supported Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund (ENRTF). The vote was unanimous by all twelve members present.

The LCCMR's 2019 Request for Proposal (RFP) sought projects across several priority issue areas, including water resources, invasive species, renewable energy, natural resource management, habitat protection, outdoor recreation, and environmental education. The 68 projects recommended for funding address this spectrum of environment and natural resources issues and will collectively benefit every region of the state. Some highlights include recommended funds for:

- The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources' Local Parks, Trails, and Grants Program, which provides competitive grants to local units of government and school districts to expand connections between individuals and the outdoors across Minnesota.
- Research to help better understand and stem the decline in Minnesota's moose population due to the spread of a deadly brain worm.
- Developing and testing new methods, such as using salt-eating plants, and using locally-sourced sanding materials, to reduce the impacts of road salts on our water ways.
- Efforts to reintroduce native mussels into streams and lakes where water quality improvements have made it possible for these populations to thrive.
- Creating a National Loon Center in Cross Lake, Minnesota, dedicated to research, education and survival of Minnesota's state bird.
- Developing secondary markets for cover crops to improve adoption by farmers of these practices that conserve soils and protect water quality.
- Completing the Minnesota Biological Survey, an effort begun 32 years ago to systematically survey the state's native vegetation and rare plant and animal species to guide conservation efforts.
- Continued support for the Minnesota Aquatic Invasive Species Research Center, which was created in 2012 with funding from the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund.

LCCMR's recommendations will next go before the 2019 Legislature for consideration and approval during the legislative session beginning January 8, 2019. Approved projects would begin work after funds become available on July 1, 2019.

273 proposals requesting a total of approximately \$191 million were received in response to the 2019 RFP. 110 proposers were invited to give presentations and answer questions before the LCCMR. From this reduced pool, 68 proposals received a recommendation for a portion of the funds available.

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Sen. Gary Dahms, Sen. Kari Dziedzic, Rep. Rob Ecklund, William Faber, Nancy Gibson,
Rep. Josh Heintzeman, Rep. Joe Hoppe, Sen. Bill Ingebrigtsen, Nicole Kessler, Denny McNamara, Norman Moody,
Rep. Jim Newberger, Michael Reese, Sen. David Tomassoni, Michael Reese, Rep. Jean Wagenius, Sen. Torrey Westrom, Della Young

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The Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund is a permanent dedicated fund in the Minnesota state treasury that was established by 77% voter approval of a constitutional amendment in 1988. The amendment directs forty percent of the net proceeds of the Minnesota State Lottery, or approximately seven cents of every dollar spent on playing the lottery, into the Trust Fund. The Trust Fund is intended to provide a long-term, stable source of funding for innovative and far-sighted activities that protect and enhance Minnesota's environment and natural resources for the benefit of current citizens and future generations. Since 1991, the Trust Fund has provided approximately \$630 million in support of over 1,600 projects benefitting every county in the state.

The Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources is made up of 5 state senators, 5 state representatives, and 7 citizen members. The function of the LCCMR is to make funding recommendations to the Minnesota State Legislature for special environment and natural resource projects, primarily from the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund. The LCCMR developed from a program initiated in 1963. Since then over \$999 million has been appropriated to approximately 2,200 projects recommended to protect and enhance Minnesota's environment and natural resources.

Additional information on the LCCMR's 2019 proposal recommendations and proposal process can be found online at: www.lccmr.leg.mn.

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