

# Minnesota Department of Natural Resources

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Office of the Commissioner

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November 8, 2016

Ms. Susan Thornton, Director  
Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources  
100 Rev Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.  
St. Paul, Minnesota 55155

Dear Director Thornton:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments to be considered by the LCCMR during its upcoming discussion on the 2018 RFP. We have reviewed last year's RFP against DNR's agency priorities and efforts aimed at addressing emerging natural resource issues. We're pleased to offer the following thoughts for consideration.

## 1. Water Resources

This section, as written, does a good job of capturing the research, monitoring, and analysis needed to support Minnesota's Water Resources. Based on the DNR's work in this area, we also suggest that the LCCMR consider including as eligible proposals that address *actions* that improve water governance (particularly at the local level), promote efficient water use, and engage citizens in making good decisions about how they use and protect water resources.

## 2. Environmental Education

We suggest highlighting work that engages diverse and changing demographics by pulling that item out of #1 and making it its own numbered element. DNR believes that ensuring continued interest from Minnesotans in our state's natural resources requires that we expand and diversify our outdoor constituencies, as well as our natural resources workforce. From our own efforts, we know that achieving this goal requires intentional initiatives. Therefore, we suggest the LCCMR consider raising the profile of proposals in this area.

## 3. Air Quality, Climate Change, and Renewable Energy

Currently, this category excludes capital projects. Per a recent conversation between LCCMR staff and Parks and Trails Director Erika Rivers, we suggest that consideration be given to capital upgrades to recreational facilities to achieve net zero building goals. It is our understanding that LCCMR has funded some carefully scoped capital projects under other categories, and we believe that allowing the same here could result in significant energy savings.

## 4. Land Acquisition, Habitat, and Recreation

We suggest adding opportunities for grants to local parks and trails. Ensuring access to outdoor experiences is key to expanding and diversifying outdoor constituencies, and local parks and trails are an important introduction to the outdoors for many people.

Sincerely,

Tom Landwehr  
Commissioner

