

Alternate Final Report

PROJECT TITLE: Mesabi Trail Development – Soudan to Ely Segment

Date Report Approved:

PROJECT MANAGER: Robert Manzoline

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AFFILIATION: Saint Louis and Lake Counties Regional Railroad Authority

Legal Citation: M.L. 2014, Chp. 226, Sec. 2, Subd. 07c

Appropriation Language:

\$1,000,000 the second year is from the trust fund to the commissioner of natural resources for an agreement with St. Louis and Lake Counties Regional Rail Authority for the right-of-way acquisition, design, and construction of segments of the Mesabi Trail totaling approximately 11 miles east of Soudan towards Ely. This appropriation is available until June 30, 2017, by which time the project must be completed and final products delivered.

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

<p>Excerpt from Original Project Statement</p> <p>The Soudan to Ely Segment yet to be constructed is 18 miles in length lying between the east boundary of the Vermillion State Park the City of Ely We are proposing to use this LCCMR appropriation, along with other funding sources, to construct the Mesabi Trail from the eastern boundary of the Vermilion State Park to the Highway 169 DM&IR Railroad grade underpass approximately 10.5 miles in length estimated to cost \$2,500,000 from the following funding sources:</p> <table> <tr> <td>Proposed 2014 LCCMR</td> <td>\$1,000,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2">Other Secured Funding Sources:</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2015 Federal Transportation Alternatives (TAP)</td> <td>\$ 400,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2016 Federal TAP</td> <td>\$ 400,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Federal Recreational Trails</td> <td>\$ 150,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2012 MN Legacy</td> <td>\$ 512,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2014 MN Legacy (minimum)</td> <td>*\$ 38,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total</td> <td>\$2,500,000</td> </tr> </table> <p>*\$500,000 of 2014 Legacy funds are being directed to the Soudan to Ely trail with funds available for this 10.5 mile segment as needed</p>	Proposed 2014 LCCMR	\$1,000,000	Other Secured Funding Sources:		2015 Federal Transportation Alternatives (TAP)	\$ 400,000	2016 Federal TAP	\$ 400,000	Federal Recreational Trails	\$ 150,000	2012 MN Legacy	\$ 512,000	2014 MN Legacy (minimum)	*\$ 38,000	Total	\$2,500,000	<p>Excerpt from Final Project Summary</p> <p>A total of 9.9 miles of trail were acquired, designed and constructed as part of the Mesabi trail system from Soudan (at Vermillion State Park) east toward Ely to the intersection of an abandoned railroad grade near Wolf Creek.</p> <p>[Actual funding sources used on this segment:]</p> <table> <tr> <td>2014 LCCMR</td> <td>\$1,000,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2">Other Funding Sources Used:</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2015 Federal Transportation Alternatives (TAP)</td> <td>\$ 394,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2016 Federal TAP</td> <td>\$ 394,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Federal Recreational Trails</td> <td>\$ 150,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2012 MN Legacy</td> <td>\$ 512,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2014 MN Legacy</td> <td>\$ 315,950</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2017 MN Legacy</td> <td>\$ 750,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total</td> <td>\$3,515,950</td> </tr> </table>	2014 LCCMR	\$1,000,000	Other Funding Sources Used:		2015 Federal Transportation Alternatives (TAP)	\$ 394,000	2016 Federal TAP	\$ 394,000	Federal Recreational Trails	\$ 150,000	2012 MN Legacy	\$ 512,000	2014 MN Legacy	\$ 315,950	2017 MN Legacy	\$ 750,000	Total	\$3,515,950
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Excerpt from **Original** ACTIVITY 1: Environmental for Federal NEPA & State MEPA and other Federal, State and Local permits

ENTRF Budget: \$100,000

Original Outcome	Original Est. Completion Date
1. COE, EPA, SHIPO, Easements, MN DNR, MPCA & Other secured	July 2017

From our experience, the trail routing described will likely be close to the final designed route; however, as part of NEPA and MEPA, we will be analyzing the “Universe” of trail route alternatives that could be used and then “down – select” to the most preferred alternative.
Other permits will be secured from the Federal Army corps of Engineers if wetlands are impacted, Federal EPA, State MPCA and Local Soil and Water Conservation, Planning & Zoning, Environmental Services.

Excerpt from **Final** Report Summary ACTIVITY 1 Environmental, NEPA, MEPA, Federal & State permits

ENRTF Amount Spent: \$ 75,449

Final Outcome	Final Completion Date
1. COE, EPA, SHIPO, Easements, MN DNR, MPCA & Other secured	Spring 2016

Environmental and right-of-way work was completed in spring 2016 with details as noted under previous Activity Status. The project was permitted by those federal, state and local agencies responsible for compliance with NEPA, MEPA and local ordinances. No issues or conflicts were raised by regulatory agents during or after construction. Final agency “sign-offs” are complete. Environmental work was conducted over 9.9 miles of trail.

Excerpt from **Original** ACTIVITY 2: Engineering design, survey, plans, specification and construction management.

ENTRF Budget \$150,000

Original Outcome	Original Est. Completion Date
2. Plans, specifications, bid documents for/and construction	July 2017

Excerpt from **Final** Report Summary: ACTIVITY 2 Plan, specification, bid documents and construction management submitted

ENRTF Amount Spent: \$223,189

Final Outcome	Final Completion Date
2. Plans, specifications, bid documents for/and construction	Dec 2018/Nov 2019

The (Vermilion 4) 3 mile segment of the trail from the Vermilion State Park to the new relocated Highway 169 is complete.

The (Vermilion 5) 4.3 mile segment of the trail from (Bearhead Road), at the Eagles Nest Town Hall, to Camp Lake Road is complete and has been accepted after the one year warranty period. The trail was not built on an existing road/grade but rather through a forested area and required substantially more work involving topographic surveys, right-of-way surveys, wetland boundaries, watershed analysis, ditch and culvert designs, horizontal and vertical curve designs, geotechnical evaluations, dirt balances, bridge design and many other factors not associated with building on an established road/grade. This additional work resulted in higher costs and was funded by LCCMR, TAP, Federal Recreational Trails, Legacy, and Regional Rail Authority.

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	<p>The (Vermilion 6) segment was planned from Camp Lake Road to the Highway 169 underpass. This portion of the trail was shortened to 2.60 miles long and terminates at Wolf Creek due to the construction budget.</p>
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Excerpt from **Original** ACTIVITY 3: Trail Construction
ENTRF Budget \$750,000

Excerpt from **Final** Report Summary ACTIVITY 3 Construction
Amount Spent \$701,362

Original Outcome	Original Est. Completion Date
3. Constructed 10 foot wide bituminous surface trail [10.5 mi]	July 1, 2017

Final Outcome	Final Completion Date
3. Constructed 10 foot wide bituminous surface trail [9.9 mi]	?

Vermillion 4: Construction of a **3.5** mile long, 10 feet wide bituminous surface trail beginning at the east end of the Vermillion State Park and ending at Bearhead Lake State Park Road (SLC 128). This segment will be located about one-half mile south of Highway 169 traversing boreal type forest, granite rock outcrops and a wonderful vista of the Vermillion peaks.

Vermillion 4: Construction of **3** miles along the former Hwy 1/169 between Vermillion State Park (VSP) and the new relocated Highway 1/169 is complete. This segment of the trail was [also] built with Legacy funds.

Vermillion 5: Construction of a **3.0** mile long, 10 feet wide bituminous surface trail from Bearhead Lake State Park road to Camp Lake Road. This trail will follow an abandon DM&IR Railroad grade to the west Shore of Armstrong Lake and then traverse southerly to Camp Lake through an open canopy forest with access to both Armstrong and Camp Lakes.

Vermillion 5: construction of **4.3** miles from the Eagles Nest Town Hall to Camp Lake Road is complete. The Regional Rail Authority was not able to utilize the existing grade due to objection by the property owners and the Eagles Nest Township Board. The relocation of Hwy 169 also required the beginning of the Vermilion 5 segment be moved to the Eagles Nest Town Hall. This segment of the trail starts at the Eagles Nest Townhall, with a trail head and kiosk, which is located 1.1 mile south of the intersection of Hwy 1/169 on the Bearhead State Park Road (C.R. 128). This segment was built with TAP, Federal Recreational Trails, Legacy, Regional Rail Authority, and LCCMR funds.

Vermillion 6: Construction of a **4.0** mile long, 10 feet wide bituminous surface trail from Camp Lake easterly along an abandon DM&IR Railroad grade ending at the railroad underpass of highway 169. The railroad grade passes by Robinson Lake and through Dead Man’s Lake traversing open canopy forest, boreal forest, wetlands, creeks and other natural settings.

Vermillion 6: construction of **2.6** miles from the end of the Vermilion 5 segment at Camp Lake Road to a point on the abandoned railroad grade near Wolf Creek is complete and has been accepted after a one warranty period. This portion of the trail utilized a floating dock/trail design to cross a wetland and could not use the old railroad grade as anticipated.

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<p>DISSEMINATION:</p> <p>Original Description: Mesabi Trail news and updates are provided through a variety of media, marketing and publications. Web site is: Mesabitrail.com. The following are some of the groups & organizations that disseminate Mesabi Trail information and typically include updates of newly completed trail segments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Club Mesabi (40,000 maps & web site) • Iron Range Tourism (30,000 brochures & web site) • MN Office of Tourism • MPR • Parks & Trails, Home & Away, other private magazines • 180,000 trail users per year • Named by the Star Tribune as “Best of Minnesota” in year 2013 • Iowa Magazine 2017 naming the Mesabi Trail #2 in the Midwest, attached 	<p>Final Report Summary: The project is now included and listed as a complete section of the Mesabi Trail. The Mesabi Trail prints 40,000 maps per year distributed to over 50 locations and events such as tourism bureaus, MN Dot (rest areas), bike shops, DNR Parks, resorts, hotels/motels, other. The Mesabi Trail website is linked to most tourism and trail information related websites in Minnesota and the Midwest. It is noteworthy to point out that website visitors spend an average of 8 minutes on website(s) meaning they are engaged in knowing about the Mesabi Trail and surrounding area.</p>
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The following segments still need to be constructed to complete the trail from Soudan to the Highway 169 underpass.

New Highway 169 to Trygg Road (C.R. 599)	1.2 miles	Scheduled for 2020 construction
Trygg Road (C.R. 599) to Eagles Nest Town Hall		
On Bearhead State Park Road (C.R. 128)	1.3 miles	In the planning stage
Wolf Creek to Hwy 169 underpass	2.5 miles.	Scheduled for 2020 construction