



Saint Louis county

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James T. Foldesi, P.E.
Public Works Director/
Highway Engineer

March 17, 2025

Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources
Centennial Office Building
658 Cedar Street
St. Paul, MN 55155

RE: Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund (ENRTF), Emerging Issues Account

Dear Commission Members,

In August of 2024, St. Louis County was made aware that the Scandinavian Cemetery, located in Duluth, MN, reported erosion problems along the Lake Superior shoreline that has exposed grave sites. The Scandinavian Cemetery, a private cemetery established in 1881, is located on London Road and is adjacent to the Historic Glensheen Mansion Estate. A cemetery board controls and operates Scandia Cemetery and has no financial means to resolve the erosion issues on its own.

Although St. Louis County has no legal obligation or responsibility over private cemeteries, the County recognizes that the continued exposure of human remains presents an ethical and environmental dilemma that requires action and a permanent solution. With the shoreline soil exposed to Lake Superior weather events and stormwater runoff, erosion and further retreat and degradation of the property will occur which the project site cannot afford. If a 'No Action' alternative is followed, Scandia Cemetery will indefinitely require routine monitoring, collection and housing of human remains, identification research, and notification of family lineage and costs of reinterment.

St. Louis County is requesting \$2,550,000 in funding from the Emerging Issues Account to complete the design, permitting, easement acquisition, and construction of a permanent concrete retaining wall for the Scandia Cemetery property. The proposed project is critical to permanently stabilize approximately 300 feet of shoreline, repair erosion, discontinue the continual exposure of human remains, and create a resilient solution to counteract the extreme weather events and normal wave action of Lake Superior. This project is also being submitted under the 2026 ENRTF solicitation. If the county is awarded Emerging Issues Account funding for the design, permitting and R/W portion of the project, the project schedule could be accelerated by one year.

Thank you for your consideration.

James T. Foldesi, P.E.
St. Louis County Public Works Director/ Highway Engineer

Attachment A:**Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund Budget****M.L. 2023 Budget Addendum Spreadsheet****Legal Citation:****Project Manager:** Rachel Gregg, P.E.**Project Title:** Bridge Engineer**Organization:** St. Louis County, MN**Project Budget:** \$2,550,000**Project Length and Completion Date:** Estimating 2 years, Project completion by December 31, 2027**Current Date:** 03/17/2025

BUDGET ITEM	Budget	Amount Spent	Balance	Justification for Generally Ineligible Expenses (if applicable)
Personnel (Wages and Benefits)				
County Project Manager: Manages the overall project, ensures project is on schedule, and performs Construction Admin during construction phase.	\$20,000	\$0	\$20,000	
County ROW Agent: Shall complete the permanent and temporary easement acquisitions to facilitate construction of the project.	\$4,000	\$0	\$4,000	
County Environmental Engineer: Obtains environmental permits to complete project construction such as DNR, US Army Corps, and NPDES.	\$3,000	\$0	\$3,000	
County Construction Inspector: Inspector during construction phase of the project. Inspector to provide construction staking, material testing, and item documentation.	\$19,000	\$0	\$19,000	
Professional/Technical/Service Contracts & Subawards				
Design Consultant: St. Louis County to hire one or more Consultants for engineering services consisting of preliminary design, geotechnical exploration, historical/cultural review, assist with environmental permitting, provide Special Provisions and final plan for construction. Consultants to be hired by Request for Proposal (RFP) process.	\$225,000	\$0	\$225,000	
Archeology, Section 106 Review: For the project to be in compliance with the Minnesota Historic Sites Act, Minnesota Field Archaeology Act, and the Private Cemeteries Act, the County shall hire a certified consultant to perform an archaeological reconnaissance survey of the site and coordinate with MnDOT Cultural Resource Unit (CRU).	\$20,000	\$0	\$20,000	

Construction Contractor: St. Louis County to hire a Contractor for field construction and completion work. Contractor to have their own agreements with subcontractors and suppliers as required to complete the project. Contractor construction costs to include 20 percent (20%) contingency for anticipated overruns and/or inflation for materials.	\$2,226,607	\$0	\$2,226,607	
Equipment/Tools/Supplies				
	\$0	\$0	\$0	
Capital Expenditures Over \$5,000				
	\$0	\$0	\$0	
Printing and Publication				
	\$0	\$0	\$0	
Travel Expenses In Minnesota				
	\$0	\$0	\$0	
Travel Expenses Outside Minnesota				
	\$0	\$0	\$0	
Other				
Other Acquisition: The County will acquire permanent and temporary easements to complete the construction and perform future operation and maintenance needs of the retaining wall. The County will be the designated owner of the proposed structure.	\$32,393	\$0	\$32,393	
COLUMN TOTAL	\$2,550,000	\$0	\$2,550,000	

Attachment B:
Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund (ENRTF)
Organization Description and Capacity



Organization: St. Louis County, MN
Project Budget: \$2,550,000
Project Length: Estimating 2 years
Completion Date: December 31, 2027

St. Louis County Public Works Department will lead the project through preliminary design and construction. Our Public Works Department is very experienced in the work necessary, ensuring the ability to deliver this project successfully and efficiently. The Public Works Department has full-time staff who are trained and fully versed in state and federal project administration, contracting, construction, and closeout requirements.

St. Louis County is fully versed and prepared to properly administer the obligations and requirements of this project. St. Louis County has a demonstrated history of successfully delivering federally funded projects, receiving nearly \$150 million in federal assistance since 2010 and regularly executes these projects of various sizes (< \$100K to \$18 million) and scope. In addition, we regularly act as a regional champion for other counties and cities by providing guidance and assistance with their federal projects.

St. Louis County's 2024 construction program was \$70.3 million, of which \$12.5 million were federally funded projects. The county also manages many projects within the regional Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) planning area of the Duluth-Superior Metropolitan Interstate Council (MIC). St. Louis County managed \$8.2 million in federally funded construction projects within the MIC planning area in 2024.