

Nancy Gibson Handout
Attachment #1

July 17, 2007

LCCMR Members and Staff:

The Six-Year Strategic Plan is an important document that should guide our funding strategy for the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund. I am proposing a change which takes cues from the Task Force which reformed our process, the Constitutional Amendment, the Statewide Conservation Plan and the statute for the Strategic plan that asks that the LCCMR to identify areas of emphasis for funding.

As it is currently drafted, the strategic plan encompasses most natural resource issues but lacks emphasis. The process that was used last year focusing on water actually gave significant funding to tackling the issue plus it helped give direction to those people, organizations and other partners involved in water resources.

The Constitutional language of the Trust Fund states that its purpose should be for the air, water, land, fish (aquatic communities), wildlife and other natural resources. That is six areas of concern that could be our focus. In other words, use one year to concentrate on air, one for land etc. I would suggest that since natural resource data is an emerging need for Minnesota, we consider that as our sixth year item.

This approach would give our partners a clear understanding as to when and where our focus would be. We would be able to assemble the best experts in that area and spend significant dollars to get measurable outcomes.

There are several projects that have come to rely on Trust Fund dollars and this approach is not intended to abandon that arena. What I am proposing is to limit our invited projects to 30-50 percent of the funds and use the remaining dollars for a focused area.

The LCCMR could use the data provided by the Statewide Conservation Plan thus far by stating the problem and then seeking ways to remedy the situation. I am not suggesting that the University of Minnesota would receive all the funding. Here are a few rough draft ideas to start the process.

SIX-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN

First Year- Natural Resource Data

Problem- Minnesota is in critical need of updating, completing and distributing natural resource data of our wetlands, streams, lakes, geological formations, soil, plants and forest resource information.

Solution:

- a. Support natural resource data collection to improve management, conservation and statewide use.
- b. Support research that protects sensitive land and water resources.
- c. Support distribution of data to communities, policymakers, and amongst resource managers for better management of our natural resources.

Second Year- Air and Global Climate Change

Problem- Minnesota needs to assess the adverse effect of global climate change so that the state can be better prepared and attempt to mitigate potential negative impacts.