

## LCCMR Six-Year Strategic Plan Discussion – Member Comments

### Foundational Information and Research

I would advocate a session on the State Conservation Plan so that we can get members tuned to the geographic, ecological and natural resource difference across the state and a session on how people are using or intend to use the Plan.

I would like to see LCCMR dive into some more wildlife research especially on some of the little known species from weasels to fox snakes. From what I can gather, most research is on the games species along with wolves and raptors. The coyote explosion is becoming an interesting story yet few people know how and where they live etc.

What percentage of R&D projects result in pilot programs or infrastructure projects? Is this measured? How do we evaluate the effectiveness of R&D?

### Invasive Species

An invasive species session, perhaps similar to the one we held out at Cedar Creek a couple of years ago with another tour of the U of M facility. Maybe tours of infested areas/restored areas (reed canary, loosestrife, garlic mustard, carp, gypsy moths, EAB, whatever we could line up)

### Environmental Education

As we look forward to review of the strategic plan, I think we need to have a conversation as to how education fits into the goals/mission of LCCMR. The past two plus years have given me the feeling that each person has a different view of what good environmental education looks like and, even more basic, if it belongs in the grant process. Does it apply to k-12, to adults, to community, to families? Should it dovetail with public education institutions? Should it be entirely hands-on, and if so, how do we create those opportunities? Should educating the public belong in every grant proposal? Can we create a conservation ethic in our population, young or old, without education?

I think one of our basic problems is the definition of education followed by the definition of "environmental education". Sometimes I feel that we want to box them up into little categories, reducing the opportunity to see education (in and about the environment) as a lifelong learning process that results in significant behavior change.

### Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund and Outdoor Heritage Fund Coordination

There may be an opportunity to better streamline overall management of all the state related environmental funds. Specifically, we could address the coordination between LCCMR and the Legacy funds. Since the passage of the Legacy Amendment there does not appear to have been any effort to address overlapping requests for project funds. Often a project will go to both groups to receive funding. We could attempt to define which organization is responsible for specific environmental efforts. A coordinated project with both groups, staffed with people who are open minded about achieving efficiency in the process, and who have no "turf" agendas could be a way forward.

### Project Evaluation

As I have become more involved in many of these environmental issues, particularly water related, I am amazed at how little discussion takes place regarding measuring the financial return on the money we spend. Put another way "what is the best bang for the buck". We could undertake a project to

determine a better method of economically evaluating projects on the front end to ensure money is being spent wisely and prudently with an eye on sound economic return.

#### Types of Project and Project Proposers

There is a strong sentiment to "do something" or "boots on the ground" as it has been referred to. We could explore how best to proceed with initiating specific projects that result in infrastructure as opposed to research, education or land acquisition. We all recognize the need for R&D and a plan before we proceed but actually accomplishing a visible project would be fulfilling and send a powerful message.

We don't get many projects from local units of government. When we do, the feeling is that they aren't as "buttoned up" as those from state agencies. Is there a way that these local units could partner more efficiently with a state agency to get these funds to the local level where many issues are expected to be initiated?

Areas of interest:

- 1) Land Asset Management – acquisition and exchanges
- 2) Agriculture/Wildlife projects or initiatives
- 3) Natural Resources – Energy Opportunities
- 4) New Business Models for Natural Resource Management