

LEGISLATIVE-CITIZEN COMMISSION ON MINNESOTA RESOURCES (LCCMR) 2009 Annual Review

Special points of interest:

- Introduced a new logo for the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund.
- \$25.7 million was recommended and approved to go toward 63 individual projects around the state (ML 2009).
- For FY 2011, \$26 million is being recommended to fund 73 individual projects around the state.
- During 2009, LCCMR provided administration and oversight for 298 individual projects in various stages of their timelines, ranging from developing work programs in preparation to begin to reaching completion and submitting final reports.
- LCCMR heard from numerous public and private sector environment and natural resources experts and visited natural resource sites around the state.

Overview: January 1, 2009—December 31, 2009

During the period between January 1, 2009 and December 31, 2009 the Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources (LCCMR):

- Submitted and received passage of a funding recommendations bill to the 2009 Legislature providing \$25.7 million to 63 individual natural resources projects around the state (the recommendations bill to the 2010 Legislature was introduced after December 31, 2009).
- Issued a Request for Proposal (RFP) to conduct their selection process for funding recommendations to the 2010 Legislature.
- Received, reviewed, and evaluated 240 proposals replying to the 2010 RFP. Forty-eight proposals (73 individual projects) were selected for recommendation.
- Conducted peer review process for 17 research projects recommended for funding.
- Administered 298 open projects, 71 of which reached completion in 2009, including projects begun in 2003 (1), 2005 (6), 2006 (5), and 2007 (59).
- Visited natural resources sites in northeastern MN and the Twin Cities metro area.



ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES TRUST FUND

The new Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund logo, introduced in 2009.

- Collaborated with the Minnesota Lottery to create and launch a new logo for the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund.
- Heard from numerous natural resources experts from both the public and private sector.
- Continued support for activities protecting and enhancing Minnesota's natural resources and providing benefit over an extended period of time.

Inside this issue:

MN's Environment and Natural Resources Trust	2
2010: Project Recommendations	2
2009: Projects Funded	2
2009: Projects Completed	3
Highlights of Projects Completed or Underway	3
2011-2012: Request for Proposal (RFP)	3
About LCCMR	4
2009: Information Gathering	4

LCCMR Process

The LCCMR makes funding recommendations to the MN legislature for special environment and natural resources projects, primarily from the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund. These recommendations are the product of a competitive, multi-step proposal and selection process.

Each funding cycle, a Request for Proposal (RFP) is issued for funding priorities determined by the Commission based on its 6-year strategic plan and ongoing information gathering activities, including expert-led issue seminars and visits to natural resource sites around the state.

The RFP is open to everyone with innovative ideas for environment

and natural resources projects that could provide multiple ecological and other public benefits to Minnesota.

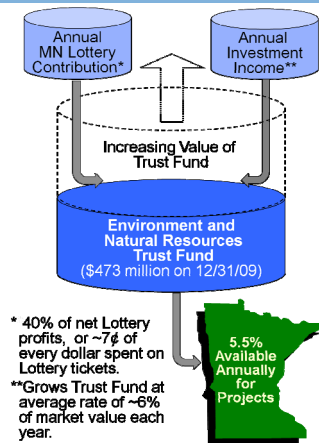
The LCCMR reviews, evaluates, and ranks all proposals submitted. A selection of the highest ranked proposals are invited to present before the LCCMR. Finally, based on the total dollars available, a subset of the proposals are chosen to recommend to the legislature for funding.

The funding recommendations go before the MN House and Senate in the form of a bill, and upon passage the bill goes to the Governor to be signed into law. Funding becomes available to projects beginning July 1 of the next fiscal year.

The LCCMR has oversight over projects funded. Projects must have a work program approved, provide ongoing project updates, and deliver a final report upon project completion.

For the recommendations to the 2010 Legislature, a total of 240 proposals requesting a combined \$163.8 million were received in response to the 2010 RFP and, from those, a total of 48 proposals (73 individual projects) were recommended for some portion of the \$26 million available.

The LCCMR is made up of 17 members: 5 Senators, 5 Representatives, 5 citizens appointed by the governor, 1 citizen appointed by the House, and 1 citizen appointed by the Senate.



About MN's Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund

The Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund (ENRTF) is a permanent fund in the state treasury that was established in the Minnesota Constitution (Art. XI, Sec.14) through voter approval in 1988.

It holds assets that can be appropriated by law, "for the public purpose of protection, conservation, preservation, and enhancement of the state's air, water, land, fish, wildlife, and

other natural resources."

The ENRTF was created to provide a long-term, consistent, and stable source of funding for innovative activities directed at protecting and enhancing Minnesota's environment and natural resources for the benefit of current citizens and future generations.

The money in the ENRTF originates from a combination of

contributions and investment income. Forty percent of the net proceeds from the Minnesota State Lottery, or approximately seven cents of every dollar spent on playing the lottery, are contributed to the Trust Fund each year. Once deposited into the Trust Fund, contributions become part of the principal balance and are invested in a combination of stocks and bonds.

2010: Project Recommendations (to begin July 1, 2010)

Approximately \$26 million is being recommended to fund 73 individual projects around the state to begin July 1, 2010.

Natural Resource Inventory, Monitoring, Mapping, and Planning: ~\$3.6 million to allow for efforts to obtain critical information and guide relevant decisions and efforts over time. This includes acceleration of the MN County Geologic Atlas program; MN Wetlands Inventory update; MN Breeding Bird Atlas; and plans and recommended guidelines for bird conservation, prairie management, forest management, farmland preservation, and watershed protection and improvement.

Terrestrial and Aquatic Habitat Acquisition: ~\$7.1 million to

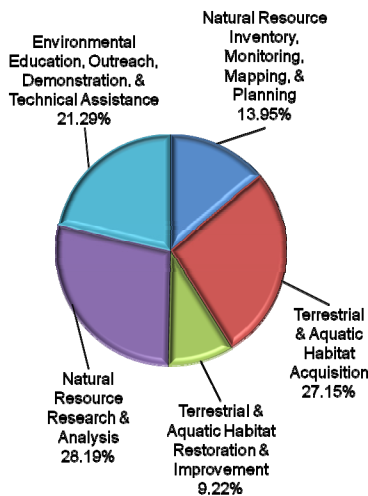
allow for acquisition of an estimated 2,900 acres in a combination of fee title (590 acres) and conservation easements (2,309 acres). Permanently protected areas will include forests, wetlands, shoreline, prairie, and other habitat for both human and animal benefit.

Terrestrial and Aquatic Habitat Restoration and Improvement: ~\$2.4 million to allow for restoration and improvement activities—including site preparation, native vegetation installation, structural improvements, and invasive species control—on an estimated 5,800 acres.

Natural Resource Research and Analysis: ~\$7.3 million to allow for efforts that will advance our knowledge about and provide

recommendations for addressing issues relating to aquatic contaminants, groundwater resources, invasive species, pollinator decline, carbon sequestration, wildlife habitat, unique ecosystems, and energy production.

Environmental Education, Outreach, Demonstration, and Technical Assistance: ~\$5.6 million to allow for efforts that will educate Minnesotans on topics including climate change, wildlife, ecosystems, and water resources; demonstrate options for energy efficiency and sustainability; and provide training, experiences, and outdoor spaces to facilitate learning about the natural world.



2009: Projects Funded (MN Laws 2009, Chapter 143, Section 2)

Approximately \$25.7 million was appropriated to fund 63 individual projects around the state.

Natural Resource Inventory and Planning: ~\$7.9 million is allowing for efforts to obtain critical information and guide relevant decisions and efforts over time. Examples include the MN County Biological Survey, MN County Geologic Atlas program, MN Soil Survey, inventorying of restorable wetlands in MN, mapping and measurement of springheds, identification and prioritization of critical lands, and plans for conservation and natural resource management.

Land and Habitat Acquisition: ~\$9 million is allowing for a combination of fee-title (1,195 acres) and conservation easement (880 acres) acquisition of ~2,000 acres of land and habitat to protect forests, wetlands, shoreline, prairie, and other habitat for both human and animal benefit.

Land and Habitat Restoration: ~\$2.2 million is allowing for restoration activities—including site preparation, native vegetation installation, structural improvements, and exotic and invasive species control—to be performed on ~5,100 acres.

Natural Resource Research and Analysis: ~\$2.7 million is allow-

ing for efforts to advance our knowledge and provide recommendations for addressing problems relating to ballast water, endocrine disruptors, invasive species, artificial drainage, climate change, and resource management.

Environmental Education and Outreach: ~\$2.5 million is allowing for efforts to assist communities with local conservation efforts and develop and pilot programs for increasing residential energy efficiency statewide.

Administration: ~\$1.4 million for FY 2010-2011 LCCMR administration (\$1,254,000) and DNR project contract management (\$158,000).



View of Lake Superior near Split Rock Lighthouse State Park—LCCMR site visit, 08/18/09

Projects Completed: January 1, 2009—December 31, 2009

Between January 1, 2009 and December 31, 2009, a total of 71 projects funded by the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund through the LCCMR process reached completion. This includes projects begun in 2003 (1), 2005 (6), 2006 (5), and 2007 (59).

Major accomplishments resulting from the projects completed include:

- Foundational natural resource data acquired pertaining to shoreline protection, Lake Superior, groundwater, soils,

and ecology and species distribution around the state.

- Expansion of parks, trails, and other outdoor recreational opportunities around the state by more than 600 acres.
- Protection of more than 1,800 acres of land and habitat through fee title and conservation easement acquisition.
- Habitat restoration activities performed on more than 17,500 acres.
- Research and analysis furthering goals for invasive species control, conservation

drainage practices, understanding effects of land retirement, sustainable timber harvesting, improving river quality, effective trout stream management, sustainability of Minnesota's water resource, and understanding current and future effects of climate change around the state.

- Education, outreach, and technical assistance efforts on sustainable natural resource uses and practices in the areas of groundwater, prairie stewardship, and wetland restoration.



Lupine (*Lupinus perennis*) growing near St. Croix Watershed Research Station, Marine on St. Croix, MN—LCCMR site visit, 06/17/09

Highlights of Projects Completed or Underway

Climate Change Impacts on Minnesota's Aquatic Resources [ML 2006: completed]:

Trends in climate variation, lake levels, water chemistry, ice out patterns, and fish communities were examined around the state. Findings were integrated into a database and are now being used by numerous agencies and groups to help address current and future effects of climate change in Minnesota.

Protection of Rare and Unique Rock Outcrop Ecosystems [ML 2007: completed; ML 2009: underway]: Ongoing effort to permanently protect ancient and rare bedrock outcrop ecosystems in the Minnesota River Valley. ML 2007 funds protected 212 acres through conservation easements.

MN County Biological Survey [ML 2007: completed; ML 2008, ML 2009: underway]: Ongoing, county-by-county effort to identify significant natural areas and collect and interpret data on the distribution and ecology of plants and animals throughout the state. ML 2007 funds completed surveys for nine additional counties.

Metro Conservation Corridors (MeCC) and MN Habitat Conservation Partnership (HCP) [ML 2007: completed; ML 2008, ML 2009: underway]: Partnerships of conservation organizations in metro and out-state working together to restore, enhance, and conserve critical land and habitat around the state. ML 2007 funds acquired 1,591 acres (490—fee title; 372—conservation easement) and pro-

vided restoration on 16,788 acres.

MN Soil Survey [ML 2007: completed; ML 2008, ML 2009: underway]: Ongoing, county-by-county analysis and mapping of the state's soils providing critical data for protecting and managing Minnesota habitat, wetlands, and water resources. ML 2007 funds allowed for progress on three additional counties along with enhancement of the data for all completed counties.

MN County Geologic Atlas [ML 2007: completed; ML 2008, ML 2009: underway]: Ongoing, county-by-county effort to map the location, size, boundaries, and vulnerability of MN's groundwater to support its wise use and protection. ML 2007 funds allowed for progress on surveys for two additional counties.

The LCCMR follows a mission of providing long-term secure support for activities whose benefits to Minnesota's environment and natural resources are realized only over an extended period of time.

2011-2012 Request for Proposal (RFP)

In January 2010, the LCCMR issued its 2011-2012 Request for Proposal (RFP) for funding from the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund beginning July 1, 2011.

For the 2011-2012 biennium, approximately \$52 million is expected to be available for projects being sought in specific environment and natural resource areas that will provide multiple ecological and other public benefits.

The RFP contains detailed de-

scriptions of the funding priorities in specific areas of the following eight categories:

1. Natural Resource Data and Information
2. Water Resources
3. Methods to Protect, Restore, & Enhance Land and Habitat
4. Land Acquisition for Habitat and Recreation
5. Aquatic and Terrestrial Invasive Species
6. Climate Change, Renewable Energy, and Air Quality
7. Environmental Education

8. Creative Ideas

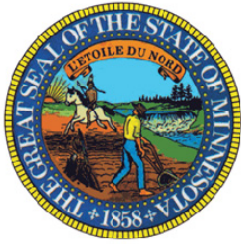
The RFP is open to anyone who has innovative ideas for environment and natural resource projects that address the adopted funding priorities described in the RFP.

All proposals received by the deadline of April 9, 2010 will receive consideration by the LCCMR.

The RFP is available at <http://www.lccmr.leg.mn>.



Black-eyed Susan (*Rudbeckia hirta* var.) growing beside the Gitchi-Gami Trail near Beaver Bay, MN—LCCMR site visit, 08/19/09



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About LCCMR

The LCCMR is made up of 17 members (5 Senators, 5 Representatives, 5 citizens appointed by the governor, 1 citizen appointed by the House, and 1 citizen appointed by the Senate). The function of the LCCMR (formerly LCMR) is to make funding recommendations to the Minnesota Legislature for special environment and natural resource projects, primarily from the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund. These projects help maintain and enhance Minnesota's environment and natural resources. The LCCMR developed from a program initiated in 1963. Since 1963, over \$650 million has been appropriated to more than 1,300 projects recommended by the Commission to protect and enhance Minnesota's environment and natural resources.

Commission Members (Jan 1, 2009—Dec 31, 2009)

Sen. Ellen Anderson
Alfred Berner—Appointed by the Governor
Jeff Broberg (Co-Vice Chair)—Appointed by the House
Rep. Lyndon Carlson
Sen. Satveer Chaudhary
Sen. Dennis Frederickson (Co-Vice Chair)
Nancy Gibson (Co-Chair)—Appointed by the Governor
John Herman—Appointed by the Senate
Rep. Larry Howes (Co-Vice Chair)
Norman Moody—Appointed by the Governor
Mary Mueller—Appointed by the Governor
Sen. Pat Pariseau
Rep. Tom Rukavina
Rep. Ron Shimanski
Sen. Jim Vickerman (Co-Chair)
Rep. Jean Wagenius (Co-Chair)
Elizabeth Wilkens—Appointed by the Governor

Information Gathering: January 1, 2009—December 31, 2009



2,341 feet underground, Soudan Iron Mine State Park—LCCMR site visit, 08/19/09

In 2009, the LCCMR engaged in numerous activities that informed its priorities for projects it recommended for funding to the MN Legislature and for its 2011-2012 Request for Proposal (RFP).

In mid-June, the LCCMR visited the eastern Twin Cities metro area and the St. Croix River Valley. Issues examined included:

- Scientific and Natural Areas;
- St. Croix River watershed
- Prairie restoration
- Endangered species and inva-

sive species

- Groundwater and surface water interactions
- Metropolitan Regional Parks

In mid-July, the LCCMR held a joint meeting with the Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council to discuss possible areas of communication and coordination between the two bodies with regard to the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund and the Outdoor Heritage Fund.

In mid-August, the LCCMR visited northeastern MN. Issues examined included:

- Renewable energy including hydropower, wind power, and biofuels
- Surface and underground mining
- Forestry
- Water quality
- State parks and trails
- Ballast water treatment

- Moose decline
- Lake Sturgeon restoration
- Wastewater treatment

In addition to the presentations heard on site visits and the 85 interactive presentations the LCCMR chose to hear from project proposers responding to the 2010 RFP, the Commission also heard several presentations and expert-led issue seminars on topics including:

- Natural Resource and community conservation planning
- New state grants management policies
- Environmental and outdoor education
- Emerging tree diseases and pests
- Updates from current projects
- Statewide water planning

Finally, public input on prioritization for Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund expenditures continued to be gathered through an online survey on the LCCMR website.



LCCMR members hearing from MN Power and DNR at Fond du Lac Dam on the St. Louis River near Duluth, MN—LCCMR site visit, 08/17/09