

M.L. 2011-12 Projects

[MN Laws 2011, 1st Special Session, Chapter 2](#), Article 3, Section 2 (beginning July 1, 2011)

[MN Laws 2012, Chp. 264](#), Article 4, Section 3 (beginning July 1, 2012)

MN Laws 2011, Chapter 52, 1st Special Session, Chapter 2, Article 3, Section 2

Subd. 04 Land, Habitat, and Recreation

Regional Park, Trail, and Connections Acquisition and Development Grants

Subd. 04d \$2,000,000 TF

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Appropriation Language

\$1,000,000 the first year and \$1,000,000 the second year are from the trust fund to the commissioner of natural resources to provide matching grants to local units of government for acquisition and development of regional parks, regional trails, and trail connections. The local match required for a grant to acquire a regional park or regional outdoor recreation area is two dollars of nonstate money for each three dollars of state money. This appropriation is available until June 30, 2014, by which time the project must be completed and final products delivered.

Project Overview

A vast network of locally managed parks and trails of regional or statewide significance exist outside the seven county Metropolitan area providing outdoor recreational opportunities for the public while preserving green space for wildlife habitat and other natural resource benefits. Through an existing grant program, the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources is using this appropriation to partner with local communities around the state to partially finance the acquisition and/or development of approximately 550 acres for new or expanded regional parks, regional trails, or trail connections outside the seven county Metro area.

OVERALL PROJECT OUTCOME AND RESULTS

The overall aim of this project is to partner with local communities in providing access to outdoor recreation opportunities. Connecting citizens with the outdoors through trail and park facilities enhances Minnesota's stewardship ethic and provides many social and health benefits. This is achieved through competitive, matching grants to local governments for land acquisition and improvements related to parks and trails through the Regional Park Grant Program, Regional Trail Grant Program, and Local Trail Connections Grant Program.

The Primary results of the project were:

- Two Regional Park Grants to Wright County for the acquisition of 186 acres for Bertram Chain of Lakes Regional Park. The park consists of 1,200 acres, including four undeveloped lakes (5.75 miles of lake shore and 1.5 miles of streams). This project expands a new regional park along the I-94 growth corridor.
- Four Regional Trail Grants. The City of Pine City to connect the Sunrise Prairie Trail to the Munger State Trail, the City of Paynesville to construct 2 miles of the Lake Koronis Trail, Itasca County to reconstruct 6.16 miles of the Mesabi and Itasca Trails and the City of St. Cloud to construct .8 miles of trail to connect Beaver Island Trail to River Bluffs Regional Park.

- Six Local Trail Connections grants to the cities of Monticello, Chanhassen, Two Harbors, Victoria and St. Michael and Sibley County providing important trail links within the communities to safety connect people to desirable locations.

PROJECT RESULTS USE AND DISSEMINATION

Information about these grants have been added to the DNR website, under the Regional Park Grant Program, Local Trail Connections Grant Program and the Regional Trail Grant Program.

Project Completed: 6/30/2017

[FINAL REPORT](#)

MN Laws 2012, Chp. 264, Art. 4, Sec. 3

Aquatic Invasive Species Cooperative Research Center; Appropriation - RESEARCH

Sec. 3 \$2,000,000 TF

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Appropriation Language

\$2,000,000 is appropriated in fiscal year 2013 from the environment and natural resources trust fund to the Board of Regents of the University of Minnesota to develop and implement an Aquatic Invasive Species Cooperative Research Center, including equipment and facility development. As a condition of receiving this appropriation, the University of Minnesota is requested to collaborate with the commissioner of natural resources in developing solutions to control aquatic invasive species. Money appropriated in this section may not be spent on activities unless they are directly related to and necessary for the purposes of this section. Money appropriated in this section must not be spent on indirect costs or other institutional overhead charges that are not directly related to and necessary for the purposes of this section. This is a onetime appropriation and is available until June 30, 2018.

Project Overview

The legislature granted the University of Minnesota \$2,000,000 from the LCCMR to start an Aquatic Invasive Species Cooperative Research Center to address and solve aquatic invasive species (AIS) problems in the state. The University will use this initial funding to establish the administrative structure for this center, establish and renovate its facilities, start studies of Asian carp biology designed to control this species, and develop work plans for the LCCMR to ensure continuing funding for the center. This three-year project is designed to stand alone while establishing a solid foundation for a second phase of operating funding being requested from the ENRTF for 2013-2019, and coordinating with ongoing zebra mussel work at the University which will be supported by the Clean Water Fund.

OVERALL PROJECT OUTCOME AND RESULTS

This project established a new research center at the University of Minnesota dedicated to developing sustainable solutions to the problems posed by aquatic invasive species (AIS) and developed a solution for bigheaded carp from Asia ("invasive carps"), two of the primary issues faced by our region. The Minnesota Aquatic Invasive Species Research Center (MAISRC) still exists at the University although it now has a new leadership, administrative structure, and vision. As part of this project, associate and scientific directors for MAISRC were hired; they then initiated the process of hiring the state's only zebra mussel and aquatic plant experts, acquired funding for a new research laboratory, renovated an extant laboratory, and established a communications plan. A memorandum of understanding with the DNR was created as well as an administrative structure that included boards dedicated to

self-governance, research, and strategic vision. In addition, research on invasive carp was conducted which identified a possible affordable and sustainable solution that does not cause collateral damage. This solution entails strategically adjusting gate openings in river locks and dams to prevent carp passage and adding sound systems to lock gates; it is now being implemented at Lock and Dam 8 with new ENRTF funding as well as a site in Kentucky by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. This solution was enabled by new developments in molecular survey techniques (“eDNA”) also instigated by this study, which showed that, contrary to public fears, few invasive carp had reached Minnesota. Finally, this study showed that an important fish disease (VHS) is not in Minnesota water and that invasive carps use novel foods and social signals (pheromones) that could be deployed in control were they to enter Minnesota. All this information is publically available and in the hands of the DNR awaiting full implementation.

PROJECT RESULTS USE AND DISSEMINATION

The first invasive carp deterrent system in the world is now in place in southern Minnesota and is now being upgraded. The only known state-directed AIS research center is also up and running. Information about this research center and its solutions are being disseminated via a website, an e-newsletter and a Facebook account, as well as via both radio and TV coverage. Sorensen and colleagues have at 11 peer-reviewed scientific publications in high quality journals and several technical reports while other MAISRC investigators have also published others. eDNA survey results conducted by MAISRC were used by the DNR and USFWS to make decisions about invasive carp survey techniques while information on feeding attractants is now being considered for use by the U.S. Geological Survey in fish toxin design. Over 3 dozen public talks were given as part of this project.

Project Completed: 6/30/2018

[FINAL REPORT](#)

[Minnesota Aquatic Invasive Species Research Center: Strategic Plan 2015 - 2025](#)

[Why Some Wetland Plants are Invasive and How They Affect Restoration: Publication](#)

