

I. Strategic Plan / RFP

“a copy of the current strategic plan...”

The following documents include:

- A. Six Year Strategic Plan – Adopted July 1, 2020
- B. Request for Proposal (RFP)
 - 1. RFP adopted January 16, 2020 for FY2022 (funding beginning July 1, 2021)
 - 2. RFP adopted December 17, 2020 for FY2023 (funding beginning July 1, 2022)

LEGISLATIVE-CITIZEN COMMISSION ON MINNESOTA RESOURCES (LCCMR)

Six-Year Strategic Plan for Minnesota's Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund



**Revised and Adopted
December 10, 2013**

**Readopted
July 1, 2020**

Jeff Broberg, Tom Cook, Sen. Gary Dahms, Sen. Kari Dziedzic, William Faber, Rep. Dan Fabian, Nancy Gibson, Bonnie Harper-Lore, John Herman, Sen. John Hoffman, Rep. Leon Lillie, Norman Moody, Rep. John Persell, Sen. David Tomassoni, Rep. Paul Torkelson, Rep. Jean Wagenius, Sen. Torrey Westrom

Six-Year Strategic Plan for Minnesota's Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund

Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources

The Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources (LCCMR) is made up of 17 members: 5 Senators, 5 Representatives, 5 citizens appointed by the governor, 1 citizen appointed by the Senate, and 1 citizen appointed by the House. The function of the LCCMR is to make funding recommendations to the legislature for special environment and natural resource projects, primarily from the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund (ENRTF). The LCCMR developed from a program initiated in 1963. Since 1963, nearly \$800 million has been appropriated to more than 1,800 projects recommended to the legislature by the Commission to protect and enhance Minnesota's environment and natural resources.

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Availability of this Publication

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Six-Year Strategic Plan for Minnesota’s Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund

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Six-Year Strategic Plan for Minnesota's Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund

I. OVERVIEW

The Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund (ENRTF) is a permanent dedicated fund in the Minnesota state treasury that was established by 77% voter approval of a constitutional amendment in 1988. The amendment directs forty percent of net proceeds from the Minnesota State Lottery, or approximately seven cents of every dollar spent on playing the lottery, into the ENRTF, where the money is then invested by the State Board of Investment for continued growth. The ENRTF is intended to provide a long-term, stable source of funding for innovative and far-sighted activities that protect, conserve, preserve, and enhance the state's air, water, land, fish, wildlife, and other natural resources. Up to 5.5% of the existing market value of the ENRTF can be expended on these types of activities each year.

Under Minnesota Statute (MS) 116P.05, Subdivision 2, the Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources (LCCMR) is tasked with making recommendations to the Minnesota Legislature for expenditures from the ENRTF. As part of that responsibility, per MS 116P.08, Subdivision 3, the LCCMR must develop, adopt, and periodically review and update a strategic plan intended to look ahead and help guide investments of the ENRTF on a six-year basis.

Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 116P. Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund

116P.08 TRUST FUND EXPENDITURES

Subdivision 3. Strategic plan required.

- (a) The commission shall adopt a strategic plan for making expenditures from the trust fund, including identifying the priority areas for funding for the next six years. The strategic plan must be reviewed every two years. The strategic plan must have clearly stated short- and long-term goals and strategies for trust fund expenditures, must provide measurable outcomes for expenditures, and must determine areas of emphasis for funding.*
- (b) The commission shall consider the long-term strategic plans of agencies with environment and natural resource programs and responsibilities and plans of conservation and environmental organizations during the development and review of the strategic plan.*

This document, *Six-Year Strategic Plan for the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund*, was developed through deliberative consensus by the LCCMR and is intended to fulfill the duties indicated in MS 116P.08, Subd. 3. It consists of two main components:

1. This document outlining general goals, strategies, and areas of emphasis for funding from the ENRTF.
2. Request for Proposal (RFP) documents issued on an annual or biennial basis outlining more delineated areas of emphasis. Once issued, RFP documents are appended to and shall be considered an extension of and update to this document.

Additionally, other documents used in developing and updating the plan are appended to this document as supplemental information as needed or appropriate.

Six-Year Strategic Plan for Minnesota's Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund

II. BACKGROUND

A. Governing Law for Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund

The Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund (ENRTF) is governed by Minnesota Constitution Article XI, Section 14, and Minnesota Statute (MS) Chapter 116P.

Minnesota Constitution Article XI, Sec.14

Sec. 14. Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund. *A permanent environment and natural resources trust fund is established in the state treasury. Loans may be made of up to five percent of the principal of the fund for water system improvements as provided by law. The assets of the fund shall 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 amount appropriated each year of a biennium, commencing on July 1 in each odd-numbered year and ending on and including June 30 in the next odd-numbered year, may be up to 5-1/2 percent of the market value of the fund on June 30 one year before the start of the biennium. Not less than 40 percent of the net proceeds from any state-operated lottery must be credited to the fund until the year 2025. [Adopted, November 8, 1988; Amended, November 6, 1990; November 3, 1998]*

NOTE: The "other natural resources" cited in Article XI, Section 14 of the Minnesota Constitution, as it pertains to the ENRTF, is further defined in MS 116P.02, Subdivision 5, as follows:

116P.02 Definitions

Subdivision 5. Natural resources.

"Natural resources" includes the outdoor recreation system under section 86A.04 and regional recreation open space systems as defined under section 473.351, subdivision 1.

MS 86A.04 Composition of System

The outdoor recreation system shall consist of all state parks; state recreation areas; state trails established pursuant to sections 84.029, subdivision 2, 85.015, 85.0155, and 85.0156; state scientific and natural areas; state wilderness areas; state forests; state wildlife management areas; state aquatic management areas; state water access sites, which include all lands and facilities established by the commissioner of natural resources or the commissioner of transportation to provide public access to water; state wild, scenic, and recreational rivers; state historic sites; state rest areas, which include all facilities established by the commissioner of transportation for the safety, rest, comfort and use of the highway traveler, and shall include all existing facilities designated as rest areas and waysides by the commissioner of transportation; and any other units not listed in this section that are classified under section 86A.05. Each individual state park, state recreation area, and so forth is called a "unit."

MS 473.351 Metropolitan Area Regional Parks Funding

Subdivision 1. Definitions.

(d) "Regional recreation open space systems" means those parks that have been designated by the Metropolitan Council under section 473.145.

Permissible expenditures from the ENRTF are indicated in MS 116P.08, Subdivision 1, and prohibited expenditures are delineated in MS 116P.08, Subdivision 2.

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Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 116P. Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund

116P.08 TRUST FUND EXPENDITURES

Subdivision 1. Expenditures.

Money in the trust fund may be spent only for:

- (1) the reinvest in Minnesota program as provided in section 84.95, subdivision 2;
- (2) research that contributes to increasing the effectiveness of protecting or managing the state's environment or natural resources;
- (3) collection and analysis of information that assists in developing the state's environmental and natural resources policies;
- (4) enhancement of public education, awareness, and understanding necessary for the protection, conservation, restoration, and enhancement of air, land, water, forests, fish, wildlife, and other natural resources;
- (5) capital projects for the preservation and protection of unique natural resources;
- (6) activities that preserve or enhance fish, wildlife, land, air, water, and other natural resources that otherwise may be substantially impaired or destroyed in any area of the state;
- (7) administrative and investment expenses incurred by the State Board of Investment in investing deposits to the trust fund; and
- (8) administrative expenses subject to the limits in section 116P.09.

Subdivision 2. Exceptions.

Money from the trust fund may not be spent for:

- (1) purposes of environmental compensation and liability under chapter 115B and response actions under chapter 115C;
- (2) purposes of municipal water pollution control under the authority of chapters 115 and 116;
- (3) costs associated with the decommissioning of nuclear power plants;
- (4) hazardous waste disposal facilities;
- (5) solid waste disposal facilities; or
- (6) projects or purposes inconsistent with the strategic plan.

B. About Minnesota's Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund

Minnesota's 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) by 77% voter approval of a constitutional amendment in 1988. 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 and 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." Up to 5.5% of the existing market value of the ENRTF can be expended each year.

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 ENRTF each year; this source of contribution is guaranteed by the Minnesota Constitution through December 31, 2024. The ENRTF may also receive contributions from other sources, such as private donations. Once deposited into the ENRTF contributions become part of the principal balance and are invested by the State Board of Investment. The income generated from the investments is reinvested back into the ENRTF. Initially, growth of the ENRTF originated primarily from contributions, but as the principal balance of the ENRTF has grown so

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has the income from investing that principal. Eventually annual growth from investment income will equal and then surpass annual growth from contributions.

C. About the Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources

The Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources (LCCMR) is made up of 17 members: five Senators, five Representatives, five citizens appointed by the governor, one citizen appointed by the Senate, and one citizen appointed by the House. Legislative members are appointed by legislative leadership and must include representation from both majority and minority parties. The citizen members appointed must have experience or expertise in the science, policy, or practice of the protection, conservation, preservation, and enhancement of the state's environment and natural resources.

The function of the LCCMR is to make funding recommendations to the Minnesota State Legislature for special environment and natural resource projects, primarily from the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund (ENRTF), and to provide oversight over projects funded through this process. The LCCMR developed from a program initiated in 1963. Between 1991 and 2013 nearly \$800 million has been appropriated to approximately 1,800 projects recommended to protect and enhance Minnesota's environment and natural resources.

D. Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources Proposal and Funding Process

The Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources (LCCMR) has a competitive, multi-step proposal and selection process. On an annual or biennial cycle, a Request for Proposal (RFP) is issued for selected funding priorities based upon an adopted strategic plan and ongoing information gathering activities, including expert-led seminars and visits to natural resource sites around the state. All proposals received in response to the RFP are reviewed, evaluated, and ranked by LCCMR members; a selection of high ranking proposals are chosen for further consideration and invited to present before the commission; and a subset of proposals is chosen to recommend to the legislature for funding based on consistency with funding priorities and total dollars available. Funding recommendations go before the legislature for consideration in the form of an appropriations bill and upon passage must be signed into law by the governor.

Funded projects are required to submit a work plan that must be approved by the LCCMR before a project can begin. Work plans provide a detailed description and statement of agreement regarding all work that will be completed and all outcomes that will be achieved with the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund (ENRTF) appropriation. During the period that funds are made available project managers are required to provide two status update reports per year to the LCCMR using their approved work plan.

Anyone may respond to the RFP and apply for funds from the ENRTF providing the proposal is consistent with public purposes. Funding recipients have included state agencies, local government units, academic institutions, non-profit organizations, and private corporations. The LCCMR's process is a competitive one and more proposals are generally received than can be funded based on the dollars available.

E. Vision and Mission for Minnesota's Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund

Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund Vision Statement

All Minnesotans have an obligation to use and manage our natural resources in a manner that promotes wise stewardship and enhancement of the state's resources for ourselves and future generations. The

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Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund is a perpetual fund that provides a legacy from one generation of Minnesotans to the many generations to follow. It shall be used to preserve, protect, restore, and enhance all of the bountiful, rare, and threatened natural resources that are the collective heritage of every Minnesotan. It shall also be used to nurture a sense of responsibility by all and to further our understanding of Minnesota's resource base and the consequences of human interaction with the environment.

Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund Mission Statement

The mission of the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund is to ensure a long-term secure source of funding for environmental and natural resource activities whose benefits are realized only over an extended period of time.

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III. SIX-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN FOR THE ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES TRUST FUND

A. Strategic Plan Development and Implementation

The Six-Year Strategic Plan for the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund is to guide the work and process used by the Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources (LCCMR) in making recommendations for expenditures. Specifically, the Six-Year Strategic Plan, as required by MS 116P.08, Subd. 3, is to provide short and long-term goals and strategies for the ENRTF expenditures, require measurable outcomes for the expenditures, and identify areas of emphasis for funding.

The Six-Year Strategic Plan consists of two main components:

1. This document outlining general goals, strategies, and areas of emphasis for funding from the ENRTF.
2. The most recently issued Request for Proposal (RFP) outlining more delineated areas of emphasis.

Additionally, other documents used in developing and updating the plan are appended to this document as supplemental information as appropriate or needed.

In development, and periodic updating, of its Six-Year Strategic Plan the LCCMR has relied on a number of resources to help identify the most pressing natural resource issues facing Minnesota along with the opportunities to address them, particularly:

- The Statewide Conservation and Preservation Plan developed with financial support from the ENRTF by the University of Minnesota Institute on the Environment.
- Information gathered on an ongoing basis from presentations, information requests, and site visits involving technical experts, citizens, state agencies, local units of government, private individuals, and nonprofit organizations.
- Other adopted plans of environment and natural resources organizations.

In implementing its Six-Year Strategic Plan, the LCCMR will identify specific priority areas for funding through each RFP it issues. In selecting the priority areas for funding in each RFP, the LCCMR will maintain a continued awareness of issues identified by the Statewide Conservation and Preservation Plan, public input, the LCCMR's evaluation of natural resource issues, and major funding initiatives identified by the MN legislature. As the most current RFP is issued it shall be appended to this Six-Year Strategic Plan document as an extension and update of the document indicating the most current statement of specific funding priorities for the strategic plan.

B. Key Issues and Strategic Framework for Six-Year Strategic Plan

In initial development of the Strategic Plan, several key issues were identified that are having the most pressing impacts on Minnesota's environment and natural resources:

- Land and water habitat fragmentation, degradation, loss, and conversion
- Land use practices
- Transportation
- Energy production and use
- Resource Consumption
- Invasive species

To most strategically address these key issues the following five core areas of potential action were identified and form the strategic framework for this plan:

- Integrated planning

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- Critical land protection
- Land and water restoration and protection
- Sustainability practices
- Economic incentives for sustainability

C. Funding Priority Areas of the Request for Proposal

The implementation of the Six-Year Strategic Plan occurs through the LCCMR's proposal and funding process for individual funding cycles, which occur on either an annual or biennial basis. Each funding cycle the LCCMR develops a Request for Proposal (RFP) with specific identified funding priority areas. While the RFP can and does vary from year to year, the funding priority areas generally occur in the following seven broader categories with more specificity for each category identified within the actual RFP:

- Air Quality, Climate Change, and Renewable Energy
- Aquatic and Terrestrial Invasive Species
- Environmental Education
- Foundational Natural Resource Data and Information
- Land Acquisition for Habitat and Recreation
- Methods to Protect, Restore, and Enhance Land, Water, and Habitat
- Water Resources

D. Goals of Six-Year Strategic Plan

The five core areas identified as the strategic framework for this plan provide an integrated approach to resource conservation and protection. The following goals address one or more of the strategic framework areas.

Land and Water Protection

- Protect and conserve land and water (surface and ground) resources that are important for overall ecosystem integrity.
- Provide protection to fragile or unique natural resources, such as prairies, shorelands, trout streams, ground water resources, surface water flows, wetlands, fens, and aquatic habitat where further development or neglect could cause irreparable harm or loss.
- Protect land resources such as large contiguous tracts of forests, prairies that are threatened by fragmentation, high quality natural areas such as those listed in the county biological survey, and important habitat areas.
- Protect and promote habitat, native species, and water quality through land protection, acquisition, and land use practices.
- Protect and promote habitat, native species, and water quality through protection from invasive species.
- Protect and promote habitat, native species, and water quality through reduction and elimination of harmful environmental contaminants.

Research, Planning, and Demonstration

- Improve natural resource data management, conservation, and use statewide through the acquisition, management, and distribution of critical natural resource data by funding efforts to generate natural resource "foundation documents" to increase accuracy, efficiency, and ease of access to the data (including maps, inventories, and surveys).

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- Address emerging issues and provide critical information to assist in our understanding and wise management of natural resources.
- Support research, planning, and/or demonstration projects that protect and conserve sensitive lands, surface and ground water resources, and ecologic integrity.
- Support evaluation of climate change impacts and reduction strategies.
- Support community-based conservation planning.

Encourage Participation in Outdoor Recreation, Hunting, and Fishing

- Promote interest and participation in angling, hunting, outdoor recreation, and environmental and natural resource education. Partnerships to accomplish this goal are encouraged.
- Acquire, enhance, construct, manage, and maintain a variety of accessible outdoor recreation opportunities throughout the state.

Evaluation and Selection Criteria

All proposals should strive to maximize efficiency and return on investment for the proposed expenditures. Additionally, the following criteria, as applicable, are considered in evaluating and selecting proposals to recommend for funding :

- **Funding Priorities:** Responds to RFP funding priorities and LCCMR Six-Year Strategic Plan for the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund articulated and adopted by the LCCMR.
- **Multiple Benefits:** Delivers multiple benefits to Minnesota's environment and natural resources.
- **Outcomes:** Identifies clear objectives likely to result in measurable, demonstrated, and meaningful outcomes.
- **Knowledge Base:** Contributes to the knowledge base or disseminates information that will benefit other efforts.
- **Extent of Impacts:** Results in broad, long-term impacts of statewide or regional significance.
- **Innovation:** Employs or demonstrates innovative approaches to more effectively and efficiently solve specific environment and natural resources issues.
- **Scientific/Technical Basis:** Reflects current scientific and technical knowledge, standards, and best practices.
- **Urgency:** Addresses an issue for which immediate future action is necessary and essential to avoid undesirable consequences.
- **Capacity and Readiness:** Demonstrates capacity and readiness for efforts to be managed and completed in a timely, accountable, and effective manner.
- **Leverage:** Leverages collaborative partnerships and additional efforts, resources, and non-state funds.

E. Strategies for Six-Year Strategic Plan

Priority will be given to innovative projects providing multiple ecological and other public benefits to Minnesota's environment and natural resources. More specifically, the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund should support efforts that:

- Identify, protect, and enhance strategic land areas that make the largest contribution to multiple benefits for conservation and increase the management of those lands to enhance the conservation, quality, and diversity of natural resources.
- Establish statewide highest value habitat corridors using consistent conservation biology methodology and criteria for habitat, water quality and quantity, and native species.

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- Acquire the most recent and accurate baseline natural resource data on a regular basis – data such as topography, parcel and land cover, soil and geological survey, and ground water quality and quantity.
- Identify and manage lands suited for human activity by using best management conservation practices to minimize the negative effects on natural resources.
- Increase understanding of potential effects of climate change on resources and develop strategies for reducing the impact of climate change on natural resources.
- Increase understanding of effects of contaminants on natural resources, including ground water, and develop strategies for reducing contamination.
- Increase public understanding of the need for better conservation, preservation, and restoration of Minnesota's habitats and landscapes.
- Develop strategies for delivery of environmental education to Minnesota students and residents at school, home, work, and play.
- Develop strategies to prevent introductions and reduce spread of aquatic and terrestrial invasive species and restore or reestablish terrestrial or aquatic habitats impacted by invasive species.
- Develop land use strategies for sustainable, renewable energy production (electricity and fuels) that protect, enhance and restore native species, water quality, habitat, and prairies.
- Evaluate renewable energy options in Minnesota, including energy conservation, based on greenhouse gas and other emissions reductions, surface and ground water use, effects on the economy, and use by the electric and transportation sectors.
- Increase involvement of citizens and communities in scientific efforts pertaining to Minnesota's environment and natural resources.

F. Outcomes for the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund

Outcomes for the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund (ENRTF) will be specifically defined by the individual work plans of the projects receiving funding recommendations. However there are some broad outcomes that are hoped to be achieved:

- Funding recommendations are consistent with and accelerate implementation of the Statewide Conservation and Preservation Plan and other related environment and natural resource plans, documents, reports, or recommendations. See "Appendix I: Environment and Natural Resources Plans, Documents, and Reports".
- Complete acquisition of baseline natural resource data, including the County Biological Survey, Soil Survey, wetlands inventory, restorable wetlands inventory, and the County Geologic Atlas by 2020.
- Funding recommendations in the aggregate include work in all ecoregions, as defined by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources.
- To the extent possible, funding recommendations support the creation and continuation of "green jobs" in Minnesota.

G. Relationship of Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund to Other State Funds and Programs

Overall

Funding from the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund (ENRTF) represents only a small portion of total state spending relating to the environment and natural resources. Historically, ENRTF

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appropriations have equaled less than one percent of the total state spending on environment and natural resources. The bulk of spending in these areas comes from the general fund, bonding, and user fees. Additionally, the Legacy Amendment to the Minnesota Constitution (Article XI, Section 15), adopted by voter approval in November 2008, dedicates portions of a state sales tax of three-eighths of one percent to specific types of environment and natural resources projects through June 30, 2034, which has added a significant boost to state spending in these areas.

One aspect of the ENRTF that sets it apart from the bulk of funding for environment and natural resources in Minnesota (i.e., traditional funds: general fund, bonding, and user fees) is that it is intended to be used for "special" efforts. M.S. 116P.03 stipulates that the ENRTF is not to be used as a substitute for traditional sources of funding for the environment and natural resources. This same stipulation, that the funds cannot supplant existing funding, applies to the Legacy Amendment Funds.

116P.03. Trust Fund Not to Supplant Existing Funding; Appropriations.

(a) The trust fund may not be used as a substitute for traditional sources of funding environmental and natural resources activities, but the trust fund shall supplement the traditional sources, including those sources used to support the criteria in section 116P.08, subdivision 1. The trust fund must be used primarily to support activities whose benefits become available only over an extended period of time.

Another aspect of the ENRTF that is unique from other environment and natural resources funding, including Legacy Amendment Funds, is that it is a permanent fund structured like an endowment to provide funding for "special" environment and natural resources efforts in Minnesota in perpetuity. This permanent status can only be altered by an additional amendment to the Minnesota Constitution.

Relationship Between Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund and Legacy Amendment Funds

There is some overlap between the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund (ENRTF) and the Legacy Amendment funds. Three of the four funds created by the Legacy Amendment have purposes directly related to Minnesota's environment and natural resources: Outdoor Heritage Fund, Clean Water Fund, and Parks and Trails Fund. However, there are also differences.

One difference is the purpose of the different funds. The Outdoor Heritage Fund, Clean Water Fund, and Parks and Trails Fund are each all limited to very targeted types of environment and natural resources projects. Whereas the ENRTF has a broader mandate with greater flexibility in the types of projects it can fund.

Another difference between the ENRTF and the Legacy Amendment funds is the revenue stream that generates them in terms of the types of public money each represents and the permanency of these revenue streams as funding sources. Money from the Legacy Amendment funds comes from public tax dollars generated through a state sales tax. The structure of the three funds makes all of the money directly available for expenditure on projects as it becomes available. However, since the sales tax is only in effect until June 30, 2034, the revenue stream is not permanent. The sources of money for the ENRTF fund are not tax generated dollars but a combination of forty percent of net proceeds from the Minnesota State Lottery and income to the state generated from investing those proceeds. In order to provide a permanent source of funds and help these dollars have the greatest impact over time, the ENRTF is structured like an endowment: money is accumulated, it is invested for continued growth, and 5.5% of the compounding principal balance is available for projects each year. Lottery proceeds are only dedicated to the Trust Fund through December 31, 2024. However, at that point the cumulative balance of the Trust Fund is projected to be large enough to ensure self-sustaining growth through investment income while still providing ongoing funding for projects.

Six-Year Strategic Plan for Minnesota's Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund

IV. MOST RECENT REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

B. Request for Proposal (RFP)

1. RFP adopted January 16, 2020 for FY2022
(funding beginning July 1, 2021)

Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources

2021 ENRTF Request for Proposal



Minnesota's Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund

Minnesota Constitution Art. XI, Sec.14: "The assets of the fund shall 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."

SUMMARY

The Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources (LCCMR) welcomes proposals for projects of all sizes that address the priorities and requirements described within this RFP and that aim to protect, conserve, preserve, and enhance Minnesota's air, water, land, fish, wildlife, and other natural resources. The LCCMR reviews applications and makes funding recommendations to the Minnesota Legislature from the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund (ENRTF). Approximately \$70 million is anticipated to be available from the Trust Fund through this RFP for projects beginning July 1, 2021. Most projects funded are 2-3 years in duration. Proposals must be submitted online at <https://lccmrprojectmgmt.leg.mn> by ~~April 15, 2020~~ **extended to April 30, 2020** at 4:30PM.

Funding Available

Approximately \$70 million is anticipated to be available through this RFP for projects beginning July 1, 2021. The LCCMR makes funding recommendations to the Minnesota Legislature from the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund. Recommended projects must be approved by the 2021 Legislature through an appropriation, signed into law by the Governor, and have a work plan approved by LCCMR before funds can be spent. For non-state entities, payment is made by reimbursement for expenses incurred and fiscal oversight is provided through a grant agreement with the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources. Most projects are 2-3 years, however more or less time can be requested.

Amount of Request

There is no minimum or maximum request amount. All proposals should strive to maximize efficiency and return on investment for the proposed expenditures.

Applicant Eligibility

The RFP is open to all who want to apply and who have demonstrated fiscal capacity. Applicants must be available to make a formal presentation to LCCMR if selected and to be available for staff or commission member questions.

New Online System

LCCMR has launched a new [online proposal submission system](#). All proposals will be submitted online. Early account registrations and proposal submissions are encouraged.

Deadline for Submission

Final proposals must be submitted online by 4:30PM on ~~Wednesday, April 15, 2020~~ **extended to Thursday, April 30, 2020**.

Information from this document may be copied and distributed to others. This publication can be made available in alternate formats, such as large print or audio format, upon request.

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Issued February 2020

Proposal and Appropriation Timeline

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Commission Assistant

Up-to-date information on deadlines and meetings can be found on the [calendar page](#) of our website.

January 16, 2020	Funding priorities determined and 2021 RFP adopted
February 12, 2020	2021 RFP issued
April 15, 2020 April 30, 2020	Final submission deadline for proposals responding to 2021 RFP
May 2020	All submitted proposals distributed to LCCMR members for review, evaluation, and ranking
June 17, 2020	A subset of high-ranking proposals selected for further consideration and invited to give presentations before the LCCMR
July 7-9, 2020 July 14-16, 2020	Selected proposals present before the LCCMR
August 6-7, 2020	Subset of proposals selected for recommendation to the Legislature for funding
August - October 2020	Projects recommended for funding begin submitting work plans for LCCMR staff review and research projects recommended for funding undergo peer review
November - December 2020	Funding recommendations are adopted by the LCCMR in legislative bill format, as they will be presented to the Legislature
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2. Acquisition of data at a scale appropriate to assess natural resource changes attributable to climate change.
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2021 Funding Priorities (Continued)

F. Methods to Protect or Restore Land, Water, and Habitat

Please review “Additional Requirements for Land Acquisition, Easements, and Restoration Projects.” (see page 6)

1. Innovative protection or restoration of lands with high-quality natural resources, ecological value, water protection value, or habitat, particularly for pollinators.
2. Long term preservation of native forest, wetland, or prairie plant genetics and viability.
3. Technical assistance for stewardship of prairies, forests, wetlands, or other habitat, or technical assistance for agricultural land management in order to protect water quality and aquatic habitat or to improve pollinator habitat.
4. Planning and implementation of community-based efforts to permanently conserve natural resources and reduce habitat fragmentation impacts on natural resources, including the impacts of transportation and other infrastructure.

G. Land Acquisition, Habitat, and Recreation

Please review “Additional Requirements for Land Acquisition, Easements, and Restoration Projects.” (see page 6)

1. The Reinvest in Minnesota program as provided in M.S. section 84.95, subdivision 2.
2. Acquisition or development of strategic lands with high quality natural resources, ecological value, recreational value, water protection value, or habitat, particularly for pollinators.
3. Acquisition or development of lands that have the greatest capacity to contribute multiple conservation benefits to wildlife, humans, and ground and surface water quality.
4. Efforts based on precision conservation methods and analysis that quantifiably identify the lands most critical to acquire. Precision conservation is a practice that considers lands in terms of the interconnected systems of which they are a part. As a practice, precision conservation compiles and integrates multiple types of available data layers and analysis (e.g., terrain analysis, soil productivity, habitat potential, economic analysis, erosion potential, proximity to surface water) to identify and guide efforts that will maximize conservation benefits.
5. Efforts involving Scientific and Natural Areas (SNA) or other areas that aim to protect unique ecosystems, such as native prairie as defined in M.S. 84.02, Subd. 5, or rare, endangered, or threatened species. Areas of these types that may not presently qualify as a priority for other State of Minnesota funds directed toward land acquisition for habitat or recreation are of particular interest.
6. Efforts that enhance habitat connectivity, benefit ground or surface water quality, improve access for natural resource management, or increase public access for recreation, particularly in areas of the state with limited protected public lands.
7. Efforts expanding outdoor recreational opportunities through additions and connections to state, regional, or local parks and trails.

H. Small Projects

The LCCMR encourages proposals under \$200,000, especially from local government units and non-profits, to quickly and efficiently provide environment and natural resource benefits in Minnesota. Proposals should address one or more of the priorities listed in the above categories A through G.

Funding May Be Available Through Other Programs

Projects eligible for established, topic-specific state agency grant programs - such as for renewable energy, sustainable agriculture, clean water implementation, regional and local parks and trails, and habitat acquisition and restoration - are encouraged to apply directly to the particular state agency grant program as funds may be available in a timelier manner.

Requirements

Project Requirements

All projects must comply with [Article XI, Section 14 of the Minnesota Constitution](#), [Minnesota Statute 116P](#), and other requirements provided in the following summary document:

- Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund (ENRTF) [Project Requirements](#)

Professional, Technical, and Services Contracts

- State contracting and competitive bidding requirements apply.

Financial Capacity

To help us evaluate financial capacity, non-profit organizations and for-profit businesses with an annual income:

- over \$750,000 should submit their most recent certified financial audit
- between \$50,000 and \$750,000 must provide their most recent IRS Form 990.
- under \$50,000 or that have not been in existence long enough to have completed IRS Form 990 or an audit must submit their most recent board-reviewed financial statements

Work Plan and Progress Reports

Project managers of recommended projects must submit a work plan. Successfully funded projects must have an approved work plan and the project manager must submit annual or semiannual progress reports. Modifications to the approved work plan and budget expenditures must be made through the LCCMR amendment process.

Additional Requirements for Land Acquisitions, Easements, and Restorations

All fee title and conservation easement acquisition proposals must include funding for development and implementation of a management and restoration plan. If no funding is requested, your proposal must address why funding for this work is not needed to achieve a high quality restoration.

All acquisition and restoration applicants must read and understand the following summary documents:

- Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund (ENRTF) [Fee Title Acquisition Project Requirements](#)
- Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund (ENRTF) [Conservation Easement Acquisition Project Requirements](#)
- Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund (ENRTF) [Restoration Project Requirements](#)

A map must be submitted with your proposal that shows the site specific location of your proposed fee title or conservation easement acquisition or restorations within the city, county, region, and/or state. The map must be legible as black and white and include a north arrow and scale.

A parcel list must be provided with your proposal that identifies proposed fee title and conservation easement acquisitions and restorations by parcel name, estimated cost, county, ecological significance, activity description, proposed number of acres, proposed shoreline or trail miles, type of landowner, and proposed title/easement holder (if applicable).

Additional information for acquisitions, easements, and restorations must be provided with your proposal that describes, among other things, how restoration, future management, and easement enforcement requirements will be met.

Guidance on Allowable Expenses

Eligible Expenses

Eligible expenses are those expenses solely incurred through project activities that are directly related to and necessary for producing the project outcomes described in the proposal. All proposed expenses must be specified in the proposal submitted. Please note that for non-state entities all funds are awarded on a reimbursement basis, unless otherwise authorized, and all eligible expenses will need to be documented. Eligible expenses may include:

- a. Eligible expenditures incurred only after the effective date as approved by LCCMR.
- b. Wages and expenses of salaried Recipient employees if specified, documented, and approved. For State Agencies: use of unclassified staff only OR request approval for the use of classified staff accompanied by an explanation of how the agency will backfill that part of the classified staff salary proposed to be paid for with these funds. This is subject to specific discussion and approval by LCCMR.
- c. Fringe benefit expenses, such as FICA/Medicare, retirement, and health insurance of Recipient's employees, if specified.
- d. Professional and technical services specified in the approved Work Plan that are rendered by individuals or organizations not a part of the Recipient;
- e. Equipment, tools, materials, and supplies specific to the project and incoming freight charges for them.
- f. Capital expenditures for facilities, equipment, and other capital assets as expressly approved. For expenditures greater than \$5,000, the Recipient must provide an explanation as to how all the equipment purchased with the appropriation will continue to be used for the same program through its useful life, or, if the use changes, a commitment to pay back to the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund an amount equal to either the cash value received or a residual value approved by the director of the LCCMR if it is not sold.
- g. Publication and printing/copying expenses necessary for contract administration, work products production, and semi-annual reports relating to accomplishments.
- h. In-state transportation and travel expenses such as lodging, meals, and mileage of personnel directly involved in the Project in the same manner and in no greater amount than provided for in the current "[Commissioner's Plan](#)" promulgated by the Commissioner of Management of Budget and as provided by LCCMR or, for University of Minnesota projects, the [University of Minnesota plan](#). Allowable meal and lodging expenses are for employees only. Purchasing meals or providing lodging for others is not an allowable expense.

Generally Ineligible Expenses—Unless Explicitly Approved

Generally ineligible expenses for reimbursement mean all expenses not defined as eligible expenses, but for which an explicit exception can be sought from LCCMR if the expenses can be clearly justified and individually documented as directly related to and necessary for a project. No broad allocations for costs in either dollars or percentages are allowed. In deciding whether to seek exception for these costs consider that cash and in-kind leverage are criteria considered in proposal evaluation. Generally ineligible expenses include but are not limited to:

- a. General operations, overhead, and other indirect expenses, including office maintenance, office utility expenses, and office materials and supplies.
- b. Office rental fees (including storage space rental).
- c. Communication expenses incurred for telephone calls, web access, postage, and similar services.
- d. Insurance, except title insurance.
- e. Attorney fees, except to acquire and clear title to land.
- f. Purchase of communication devices such as pagers, cell phones, or smart phones.
- g. Purchase of computers, tablets, or audiovisual equipment.
- h. Generally available food and refreshments, except if explicitly approved for certain types of events.
- i. Conference attendance and associated costs and fees, except if to participate in formal presentation of project findings.
- j. Out of state transportation and travel expenses.
- k. Single-source contracts. Justification for an exception must also include the specific entity by name, why the single source is needed, and how the recipient is ensuring a competitive price for the contracted work.

Prohibited Expenses

Prohibited expenses for reimbursement mean all expenses indicated below, including but not limited to:

- a. Any expenses incurred before the project is authorized, before July 1, 2021, or before LCCMR work plan approval—whichever is latest.
- b. Fundraising.
- c. Taxes, except sales tax on goods and services.
- d. Lobbyists or political contributions.
- e. Advertising and marketing expenses.
- f. Loans, grants, or subsidies to persons or entities for development.
- g. Bad debts, late payment fees, finance charges, or contingency funds.
- h. Interest or investment management fees.
- i. Directors or officers salary.
- j. Merit awards and bonuses.
- k. Memberships (including subscriptions and dues).
- l. Publications, periodicals, and subscriptions.
- m. Employee workplace parking.
- n. Entertainment, decorations, gifts, and prizes.

Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund: MN Constitution and Statutory Expenditures

[Minnesota Constitution Art. XI, Sec.14](#): Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund Established

A permanent environment and natural resources trust fund is established in the state treasury. Loans may be made of up to five percent of the principal of the fund for water system improvements as provided by law. The assets of the fund shall 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 amount appropriated each year of a biennium, commencing on July 1 in each odd-numbered year and ending on and including June 30 in the next odd-numbered year, may be up to 5-1/2 percent of the market value of the fund on June 30 one year before the start of the biennium. Not less than 40 percent of the net proceeds from any state-operated lottery must be credited to the fund until the year 2025. [Adopted, November 8, 1988; Amended, November 6, 1990; November 3, 1998]

[M.S. 116P.08](#) Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund Expenditures and Exceptions

Subdivision 1. **Expenditures.** (a) Money in the trust fund may be spent ONLY for:

- (1) the reinvest in Minnesota program as provided in section 84.95, subd. 2;
- (2) research that contributes to increasing the effectiveness of protecting or managing the state's environment or natural resources;
- (3) collection and analysis of information that assists in developing the state's environmental and natural resources policies;
- (4) enhancement of public education, awareness, and understanding necessary for the protection, conservation, restoration, and enhancement of air, land, water, forests, fish, wildlife, and other natural resources;
- (5) capital projects for the preservation and protection of unique natural resources;
- (6) activities that preserve or enhance fish, wildlife, land, air, water, and other natural resources that otherwise may be substantially impaired or destroyed in any area of the state;
- (7) administrative and investment expenses incurred by the state board of investment in investing deposits to the trust fund; and
- (8) administrative expenses subject to the limits in section 116P.09.

(b) In making recommendations for expenditures from the trust fund, the commission shall give priority to funding programs and projects under paragraph (a), clause (1) and (6). Any request for proposals issued by the commission shall clearly indicate these priorities.

Subdivision 2. **Exceptions.** Money from the trust fund may not be spent for:

- (1) purposes of environmental compensation and liability under chapter 115B and response action under chapter 115C;
- (2) purposes of municipal water pollution control in municipalities with a population of 5,000 or more under the authority of chapters 115 and 116;
- (3) costs associated with the decommissioning of nuclear power plants;
- (4) hazardous waste disposal facilities;
- (5) solid waste disposal facilities; or
- (6) projects or purposes inconsistent with the strategic plan.

Evaluation Criteria

The following criteria, as applicable, will be considered in evaluating proposals:

- **Funding Priorities:** Responds to RFP funding priorities.
- **Multiple Benefits:** Delivers multiple benefits to Minnesota's environment and natural resources.
- **Outcomes:** Identifies clear objectives likely to result in measurable, demonstrated, and meaningful outcomes.
- **Knowledge Base:** Contributes to the knowledge base or disseminates information that will benefit other efforts.
- **Extent of Impact:** Results in broad, long-term impacts of statewide, regional, or local significance.
- **Innovation:** Employs or demonstrates innovative approaches to more effectively and efficiently solve specific environment and natural resources issues.
- **Scientific/Technical Basis:** Reflects current scientific and technical knowledge, standards, and best practices.
- **Urgency:** Addresses an issue for which immediate future action is urgent and critical to avoid undesirable consequences.
- **Capacity and Readiness:** Demonstrates capacity and readiness for efforts to be managed and completed in timely, accountable, and effective manner.
- **Leverage:** Leverages collaborative partnerships and additional efforts, resources, and non-state funds.

How To Apply

Proposals due by 4:30PM on ~~Wednesday, April 15, 2020~~ **extended to Thursday, April 30, 2020**

1. Register for an account on the [LCCMR Proposal and Grant Management System](#).
2. Login and click "Create a New Proposal."
3. Follow the instructions for completing your proposal.
If you would like to view blank sample proposals, you can find them on our [2021 Funding Process page](#).
4. Upload your completed attachments as required:
 - A. Visual component or map (1 page limit)
 - B. Letter or resolution from your governing board authorizing submission of the proposal (non-profits, tribes, and local units of government only)
 - C. 990 tax information, certified audit, or board-reviewed financial statements as required
5. Review all information and attachments.
6. Click "Submit." (Note: state and federal agencies, colleges, and universities must have an authorized representative submit the proposal).
7. Save or print the confirmation email. Please check your junk mail folder if the confirmation email does not appear in your inbox. Contact LCCMR if you did not receive a confirmation email or if your proposal status does not appear as "Final Submitted" on your dashboard.
8. To follow along with the 2021 funding process, visit our [2021 Funding Process page](#).

B. Request for Proposal (RFP)

2. RFP adopted December 17, 2020 for FY2023
(funding beginning July 1, 2022)



Minnesota's Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund *Minnesota Constitution Art. XI, Sec.14:*
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SUMMARY

The Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources (LCCMR) welcomes proposals for projects of all sizes that address the priorities and requirements described within this RFP and that aim to protect, conserve, preserve, and enhance Minnesota’s air, water, land, fish, wildlife, and other natural resources. The LCCMR reviews applications and makes funding recommendations to the Minnesota Legislature from the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund (ENRTF). Approximately \$70 million is anticipated to be available from the Trust Fund through this RFP for projects beginning July 1, 2022. Most projects funded are two to three years in duration. Proposals must be submitted online at <https://lccmrprojectmgmt.leg.mn> by April 2, 2021 at 4:30PM.

Funding Available

Approximately \$70 million is anticipated to be available through this RFP for projects beginning July 1, 2022. The LCCMR makes recommendations to the Minnesota Legislature for funding from the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund. Recommended projects must be approved by the 2022 Legislature through an appropriation, signed into law by the Governor, and have a work plan approved by LCCMR before funds can be spent. For non-state entities, payment is made by reimbursement for expenses incurred and fiscal oversight is provided through a grant agreement with the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources. Most projects are two to three years long, however more or less time can be requested.

Amount of Request

There is no minimum or maximum request amount. All proposals should strive to maximize efficiency and return on investment for the proposed expenditures.

Applicant Eligibility

The RFP is open to all who want to apply and who have demonstrated fiscal capacity. Applicants must be available to make a formal presentation to LCCMR if selected and to be available for staff or commission member questions.

Online Proposal System

LCCMR launched an [online proposal submission system](#) last year. All proposals must be submitted through the online system. Early account registrations and proposal submissions are strongly encouraged.

Deadline for Submission

Final proposals must be submitted online by April 2, 2021 at 4:30PM.

Information from this document may be copied and distributed to others. This publication can be made available in alternate formats, such as large print or audio format, upon request.

Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources
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St. Paul, MN 55155
Phone: 651-296-2406
Email: lccmr@lccmr.leg.mn
Website: www.lccmr.leg.mn

Proposal and Appropriation Timeline

LCCMR MEMBERS

(as of 12/31/20)

Sen. Gary Dahms
 Sen. Kari Dziedzic
 Rep. Rob Ecklund
 William Faber
 Rep. Josh Heintzeman
 Nicole Kessler
 Denny McNamara
 Norman Moody
 Mike Reese
 Sen. Torrey Westrom
 Rep. Jean Wagenius

Co-Chairs

Nancy Gibson
 Rep. Rick Hansen
 Sen. Bill Ingebrigtsen

Co-Vice Chairs

Rep. Tama Theis
 Sen. David Tomassoni
 Della Young

LCCMR STAFF

Becca Nash
Director

Michael Varien
Senior Project Analyst

Corrie Layfield
Senior Project Analyst

Rory Anderson
*Project Analyst and
 Communications Specialist*

Diana Griffith
Commission Assistant

Up-to-date information on deadlines and meetings can be found on the [calendar page](#) of our website.

December 17, 2020	Funding priorities determined and 2022 RFP adopted
January 11, 2021	2022 RFP issued
April 2, 2021	Final submission deadline for proposals responding to 2022 RFP
May 2021	All submitted proposals distributed to LCCMR members for review, evaluation, and ranking
June 16-17, 2021	A subset of high-ranking proposals selected for further consideration and invited to give presentations before the LCCMR
July 6-8, 2021 July 13-15, 2021	Selected proposals present before the LCCMR
July 28-29, 2021	Subset of proposals selected for recommendation to the Legislature for funding
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2022 Funding Priorities (Continued)

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1. Innovative approaches to air quality improvement that reduce impacts on human health, the environment, or natural resources, such as by preventing, reducing, or mitigating airborne contaminants including PAHs (polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons).
2. Acquisition of data at a scale appropriate to assess natural resource changes attributable to climate change.
3. Research to help understand how to mitigate, adapt, or make Minnesota's ecosystems more resilient to climate change impacts, including drought and extreme weather events.
4. Implementation of innovative efforts aimed at mitigating, adapting, or making Minnesota's ecosystems more resilient to climate change impacts, including drought and extreme weather events.
5. Reduction of greenhouse gas emissions through new and innovative approaches to waste reduction or energy efficiency. Standard, required, and ongoing efforts will not be considered.

2022 Funding Priorities (Continued)

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1. Innovative protection or restoration of lands with high-quality natural resources, ecological value, water protection value, or habitat, particularly for pollinators.
2. Long term preservation of native forest, wetland, or prairie plant genetics and viability.
3. Technical assistance for stewardship of prairies, forests, wetlands, or other habitat, or technical assistance for agricultural land management in order to protect water quality and aquatic habitat or to improve pollinator habitat.
4. Planning and implementation of community-based efforts to permanently conserve natural resources and reduce habitat fragmentation impacts on natural resources, including the impacts of transportation and other infrastructure.

G. Land Acquisition, Habitat, and Recreation

Please review “Additional Requirements for Land Acquisition, Easements, and Restoration Projects.” (see page 6)

1. The Reinvest in Minnesota program as provided in M.S. section 84.95, subdivision 2.
2. Acquisition or development of strategic lands with high quality natural resources, ecological value, recreational value, water protection value, or habitat, particularly for pollinators.
3. Acquisition or development of lands that have the greatest capacity to contribute multiple conservation benefits to wildlife, humans, and ground and surface water quality.
4. Efforts based on precision conservation methods and analysis that quantifiably identify the lands most critical to acquire. Precision conservation is a practice that considers lands in terms of the interconnected systems of which they are a part. As a practice, precision conservation compiles and integrates multiple types of available data layers and analysis (e.g., terrain analysis, soil productivity, habitat potential, economic analysis, erosion potential, proximity to surface water) to identify and guide efforts that will maximize conservation benefits.
5. Efforts involving Scientific and Natural Areas (SNA) or other areas that aim to protect unique ecosystems, such as native prairie as defined in M.S. 84.02, Subd. 5, or rare, endangered, or threatened species. Areas of these types that may not presently qualify as a priority for other State of Minnesota funds directed toward land acquisition for habitat or recreation are of particular interest.
6. Efforts that enhance habitat connectivity, benefit ground or surface water quality, improve access for natural resource management, or increase public access for recreation, particularly in areas of the state with limited protected public lands.
7. Efforts expanding outdoor recreational opportunities through additions and connections to state, regional, or local parks and trails.

H. Small Projects

The LCCMR encourages proposals under \$200,000, especially from local government units and non-profits, to quickly and efficiently provide environment and natural resource benefits in Minnesota. Proposals should address one or more of the priorities listed in the above categories A through G.

Funding May Be Available Through Other Programs

Projects eligible for established, topic-specific state agency grant programs - such as for renewable energy, sustainable agriculture, clean water implementation, regional and local parks and trails, and habitat acquisition and restoration - are encouraged to apply directly to the particular state agency grant program as funds may be available in a timelier manner.

Requirements

Project Requirements

All projects must comply with [Article XI, Section 14 of the Minnesota Constitution](#), [Minnesota Statute 116P](#), and other requirements provided in the following summary document:

- Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund (ENRTF) [Project Requirements](#)

Professional, Technical, and Services Contracts

- State contracting and competitive bidding requirements apply.

Financial Capacity

To help us evaluate financial capacity, non-profit organizations and for-profit businesses with an annual income:

- over \$750,000 should submit their most recent certified financial audit
- between \$50,000 and \$750,000 must provide their most recent IRS Form 990.
- under \$50,000 or that have not been in existence long enough to have completed IRS Form 990 or an audit must submit their most recent board-reviewed financial statements

Work Plan and Progress Reports

Project managers of recommended projects must submit a work plan. Successfully funded projects must have an approved work plan and the project manager must submit annual or semiannual progress reports. Modifications to the approved work plan and budget expenditures must be made through the LCCMR amendment process.

Additional Requirements for Land Acquisitions, Easements, and Restorations

All fee title and conservation easement acquisition proposals must include funding for development and implementation of a management and restoration plan. If no funding is requested, your proposal must address why funding for this work is not needed to achieve a high quality restoration.

All acquisition and restoration applicants must read and understand the following summary documents:

- Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund (ENRTF) [Fee Title Acquisition Project Requirements](#)
- Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund (ENRTF) [Conservation Easement Acquisition Project Requirements](#)
- Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund (ENRTF) [Restoration Project Requirements](#)

A map must be submitted with your proposal that shows the site specific location of your proposed fee title or conservation easement acquisition or restorations within the city, county, region, and/or state. The map must be legible as black and white and include a north arrow and scale.

A parcel list must be provided with your proposal that identifies proposed fee title and conservation easement acquisitions and restorations by parcel name, estimated cost, county, ecological significance, activity description, proposed number of acres, proposed shoreline or trail miles, type of landowner, and proposed title/easement holder (if applicable).

Additional information for acquisitions, easements, and restorations must be provided with your proposal that describes, among other things, how restoration, future management, and easement enforcement requirements will be met.

Guidance on Allowable Expenses

Eligible Expenses

Eligible expenses are those expenses solely incurred through project activities that are directly related to and necessary for producing the project outcomes described in the proposal. All proposed expenses must be specified in the proposal submitted. Please note that for non-state entities all funds are awarded on a reimbursement basis, unless otherwise authorized, and all eligible expenses will need to be documented. Eligible expenses may include:

- a. Eligible expenditures incurred only after the effective date as approved by LCCMR.
- b. Wages and expenses of salaried Recipient employees if specified, documented, and approved. For State Agencies: use of unclassified staff only OR request approval for the use of classified staff accompanied by an explanation of how the agency will backfill that part of the classified staff salary proposed to be paid for with these funds. This is subject to specific discussion and approval by LCCMR.
- c. Fringe benefit expenses, such as FICA/Medicare, retirement, and health insurance of Recipient's employees, if specified.
- d. Professional and technical services specified in the approved Work Plan that are rendered by individuals or organizations not a part of the Recipient;
- e. Equipment, tools, materials, and supplies specific to the project and incoming freight charges for them.
- f. Capital expenditures for facilities, equipment, and other capital assets as expressly approved. For expenditures greater than \$5,000, the Recipient must provide an explanation as to how all the equipment purchased with the appropriation will continue to be used for the same program through its useful life, or, if the use changes, a commitment to pay back to the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund an amount equal to either the cash value received or a residual value approved by the director of the LCCMR if it is not sold.
- g. Publication and printing/copying expenses necessary for contract administration, work products production, and semi-annual reports relating to accomplishments.
- h. In-state transportation and travel expenses such as lodging, meals, and mileage of personnel directly involved in the Project in the same manner and in no greater amount than provided for in the current "[Commissioner's Plan](#)" promulgated by the Commissioner of Management of Budget and as provided by LCCMR or, for University of Minnesota projects, the [University of Minnesota plan](#). Allowable meal and lodging expenses are for employees only. Purchasing meals or providing lodging for others is not an allowable expense.

Generally Ineligible Expenses—Unless Explicitly Approved

Generally ineligible expenses for reimbursement mean all expenses not defined as eligible expenses, but for which an explicit exception can be sought from LCCMR if the expenses can be clearly justified and individually documented as directly related to and necessary for a project. No broad allocations for costs in either dollars or percentages are allowed. In deciding whether to seek exception for these costs consider that cash and in-kind leverage are criteria considered in proposal evaluation. Generally ineligible expenses include but are not limited to:

- a. General operations, overhead, and other indirect expenses, including office maintenance, office utility expenses, and office materials and supplies.
- b. Office rental fees (including storage space rental).
- c. Communication expenses incurred for telephone calls, web access, postage, and similar services.
- d. Insurance, except title insurance.
- e. Attorney fees, except to acquire and clear title to land.
- f. Purchase of communication devices such as pagers, cell phones, or smart phones.
- g. Purchase of computers, tablets, or audiovisual equipment.
- h. Generally available food and refreshments, except if explicitly approved for certain types of events.
- i. Conference attendance and associated costs and fees, except if to participate in formal presentation of project findings.
- j. Out of state transportation and travel expenses.
- k. Single-source contracts. Justification for an exception must also include the specific entity by name, why the single source is needed, and how the recipient is ensuring a competitive price for the contracted work.

Prohibited Expenses

Prohibited expenses for reimbursement mean all expenses indicated below, including but not limited to:

- a. Any expenses incurred before the project is authorized, before July 1, 2022, or before LCCMR work plan approval—whichever is latest.
- b. Fundraising.
- c. Taxes, except sales tax on goods and services.
- d. Lobbyists or political contributions.
- e. Advertising and marketing expenses.
- f. Loans, grants, or subsidies to persons or entities for development.
- g. Bad debts, late payment fees, finance charges, or contingency funds.
- h. Interest or investment management fees.
- i. Directors or officers salary.
- j. Merit awards and bonuses.
- k. Memberships (including subscriptions and dues).
- l. Publications, periodicals, and subscriptions.
- m. Employee workplace parking.
- n. Entertainment, decorations, gifts, and prizes.

Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund: MN Constitution and Statutory Expenditures

[Minnesota Constitution Art. XI, Sec.14](#): Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund Established

A permanent environment and natural resources trust fund is established in the state treasury. Loans may be made of up to five percent of the principal of the fund for water system improvements as provided by law. The assets of the fund shall 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 amount appropriated each year of a biennium, commencing on July 1 in each odd-numbered year and ending on and including June 30 in the next odd-numbered year, may be up to 5-1/2 percent of the market value of the fund on June 30 one year before the start of the biennium. Not less than 40 percent of the net proceeds from any state-operated lottery must be credited to the fund until the year 2025. [Adopted, November 8, 1988; Amended, November 6, 1990; November 3, 1998]

[M.S. 116P.08](#) Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund Expenditures and Exceptions

Subdivision 1. **Expenditures.** (a) Money in the trust fund may be spent ONLY for:

- (1) the reinvest in Minnesota program as provided in section 84.95, subd. 2;
- (2) research that contributes to increasing the effectiveness of protecting or managing the state's environment or natural resources;
- (3) collection and analysis of information that assists in developing the state's environmental and natural resources policies;
- (4) enhancement of public education, awareness, and understanding necessary for the protection, conservation, restoration, and enhancement of air, land, water, forests, fish, wildlife, and other natural resources;
- (5) capital projects for the preservation and protection of unique natural resources;
- (6) activities that preserve or enhance fish, wildlife, land, air, water, and other natural resources that otherwise may be substantially impaired or destroyed in any area of the state;
- (7) administrative and investment expenses incurred by the state board of investment in investing deposits to the trust fund; and
- (8) administrative expenses subject to the limits in section 116P.09.

(b) In making recommendations for expenditures from the trust fund, the commission shall give priority to funding programs and projects under paragraph (a), clause (1) and (6). Any request for proposals issued by the commission shall clearly indicate these priorities.

Subdivision 2. **Exceptions.** Money from the trust fund may not be spent for:

- (1) purposes of environmental compensation and liability under chapter 115B and response action under chapter 115C;
- (2) purposes of municipal water pollution control in municipalities with a population of 5,000 or more under the authority of chapters 115 and 116;
- (3) costs associated with the decommissioning of nuclear power plants;
- (4) hazardous waste disposal facilities;
- (5) solid waste disposal facilities; or
- (6) projects or purposes inconsistent with the strategic plan.

Evaluation Criteria

The following criteria, as applicable, will be considered in evaluating proposals:

- **Funding Priorities:** Responds to RFP funding priorities.
- **Multiple Benefits:** Delivers multiple benefits to Minnesota’s environment and natural resources.
- **Outcomes:** Identifies clear objectives likely to result in measurable, demonstrated, and meaningful outcomes.
- **Knowledge Base:** Contributes to the knowledge base or disseminates information that will benefit other efforts.
- **Extent of Impact:** Results in broad, long-term impacts of statewide, regional, or local significance.
- **Innovation:** Employs or demonstrates innovative approaches to more effectively and efficiently solve specific environment and natural resources issues.
- **Scientific/Technical Basis:** Reflects current scientific and technical knowledge, standards, and best practices.
- **Urgency:** Addresses an issue for which immediate future action is urgent and critical to avoid undesirable consequences.
- **Capacity and Readiness:** Demonstrates capacity and readiness for efforts to be managed and completed in timely, accountable, and effective manner.
- **Leverage:** Leverages collaborative partnerships and additional efforts, resources, and non-state funds.

How To Apply

Proposals due by April 2, 2021 at 4:30PM

1. Register for an account on the [LCCMR Proposal and Grant Management System](#).
2. Login and click “Create a New Proposal.”
3. Follow the instructions for completing your proposal.
If you would like to view blank sample proposals, you can find them on our [2022 Funding Process page](#).
4. Upload your completed attachments as required:
 - A. Visual component or map (1 page limit)
 - B. Letter or resolution from your governing board authorizing submission of the proposal (non-profits, tribes, and local units of government only)
 - C. 990 tax information, certified audit, or board-reviewed financial statements as required
5. Review all information and attachments.
6. Click “Submit.” (Note: state and federal agencies, colleges, and universities must have an authorized representative submit the proposal).
7. Save or print the confirmation email. Please check your junk mail folder if the confirmation email does not appear in your inbox. Contact LCCMR if you did not receive a confirmation email or if your proposal status does not appear as “Final Submitted” on your dashboard.
8. To follow along with the 2022 funding process, visit our [2022 Funding Process page](#).