

**Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund
2011-2012 Request for Proposals (RFP)**

Subd: 04k

Project Title: Natural and Scenic Area Acquisition Grants

Category: D. Land Acquisition for Habitat and Recreation

Total Project Budget: \$ 1,000,000

Proposed Project Time Period for the Funding Requested: 3 yrs, July 2011 - June 2014

Other Non-State Funds (secured): \$ 975,000

Summary:

Four to twelve matching grants will be provided to local governments for acquisition of approximately 200-400 acres for new or expanded natural and scenic areas for public use.

Name: Ronald Potter

Sponsoring Organization: DNR

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Location:

Region: Statewide

Ecological Section: Statewide

County Name: Statewide

City / Township:

2011-2012 MAIN PROPOSAL

PROJECT TITLE: Natural and Scenic Area Acquisition

I. PROJECT STATEMENT

Opportunities for local governments to acquire and protect natural and scenic areas statewide are diminishing due to development, especially in high growth areas, shore lands, bluff tops and areas where land use changes may limit future opportunities. The overall aim of this project is to ensure protection of natural and scenic resources by helping and encouraging local governments to acquire and protect such land for appropriate public use, protection of natural communities, species protection, appreciation of scenic vistas, and scientific and environmental education purposes. This aim is achieved through competitive, matching grants that provide financial incentive and ensure the land and natural resources are retained for public use in perpetuity. These areas complement state protected areas and provide close to home natural resource based benefits.

II. DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT ACTIVITIES

Activity 1: Natural and Scenic Area Grants **Budget:** \$975,000

The requested funding will provide about two to six matching grants to cities, counties, townships and school districts for acquisition of approximately 100 – 200 acres for new or expanded natural and scenic areas. Two grant rounds are proposed. These grants require a 50% state and a 50% local match. The local match for projects funded at the requested level would meet or exceed \$1 million.

Outcome	Completion Date
1. Provide 2-6 matching grants	June, 2011, June 2012
2. Grantees acquire 100-200 acres	By June, 2014

Activity 2. Administrative/Personnel Costs **Budget:** \$25,000

The requested funding will be used to support personnel costs for administering the grant program. Grant staff persons are involved in grant solicitation, evaluation and ranking, grant agreement management, project billings, project inspections, and compliance monitoring.

As shown in the Detailed Project Budget, work program approval is requested for personnel expenses to be incurred by two DNR classified staff involved in administering this grant program. Payment of classified staff with Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund money will not result in supplanting of the regular budget. A cost coding

Natural and Scenic Area Acquisition

system is used to document the hours spent by each staff person in administering the program. Two grants program staff would contribute an estimated 425-450 hours over the three year project period. The requested amount represents 2.5% of the proposed Activity 1 budget.

Outcome	Completion Date
1. Complete application round	June, 2011, June 2012
2. Complete 2-6 grant agreements	Fall 2011 and 2012
3. Project closeouts	By June, 2014

III. PROJECT STRATEGY AND TIMELINE

A. Project Team/Partners

Partners are local governments and school districts. They will acquire, own and manage the natural and scenic areas. They will provide match dollars as well as covering costs of appraisals, any required archeological/historical surveys, permits, etc. They will also assume all operations and maintenance costs.

B. Timeline Requirements

This is an ongoing program. The request is for two annual grant solicitations in the spring of 2011 and 2012 with acquisition completed by June 2014.

C. Long-Term Strategy and Future Funding Needs

The long-term strategy for the Natural and Scenic Area Grant program is to provide an incentive to local governments to protect natural and scenic resources that do not qualify for state designation, but have important regional or local significance. These areas complement state protected areas and provide close-to-home opportunities for nature study, science and environmental education, species protection, outdoor recreation, and appreciation of scenic vistas. These areas can play a role in addressing the increasing disconnect between people and nature. This program is not eligible to receive funding through the new Legacy parks and trails fund since these areas generally do not meet the size and recreational use criteria related to that program.

2011-2012 Detailed Project Budget

Natural and Scenic Area Acquisition

IV. TOTAL TRUST FUND REQUEST BUDGET: 3 years

<u>BUDGET ITEM</u>	<u>AMOUNT</u>
Personnel: Two grants staff in the Parks and Trails Division will contribute an estimated 425-450 hours.	\$25,000
Acquisition: An estimated 4-12 matching grants will be provided to local governments for acquisition of approximately 200-400 acres of natural and scenic areas.	\$975,000
TOTAL ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES TRUST FUND \$ REQUEST	\$1,000,000

V. OTHER FUNDS

<u>SOURCE OF FUNDS</u>	<u>AMOUNT</u>	<u>Status</u>
Other Non-State \$ Being Applied to Project During Project Period: Local government grant recipients are required to provide at least a dollar for dollar match. In many cases the local governments actually pay more than 50% of the total project cost.	\$975,000	Local match
Other State \$ Being Applied During the project Period: A number of other DNR staff, functions and activities contribute to the ability to implement this program. A "shared services" formula was used to develop this estimate of contributions from these other sources.	\$25,830	Pending approval of requested funding
In-Kind Services During Project Period:	\$0	
Remaining \$ From Current ENRTF Appropriation (if applicable)	\$0	
Funding History: In 2007 the legislature appropriated \$1,000,000 for "Nonmetropolitan Regional Parks and natural and Scenic Area Acquisitions." Of this total, \$386,000 was used to fund two Natural and Scenic Area projects. The projects have been completed.	\$386,000	Funds have been spent

Project Manager Qualifications and Organization Description

Project Manager: Ronald Potter
Affiliation: Department of Natural Resources, Division of Parks and Trails
Telephone Number: (651) 259-5632
Title: Recreation Systems Manager

Ronald Potter has worked for the Minnesota DNR for over 35 years in various positions throughout the state. Currently, he is the Recreation Systems Manager for the Parks and Trails Division. He administers the Division's policies, programs, grants and resource management functions for an extensive, integrated outdoor recreation base including state parks, state trails, grant-in-aid, off-highway vehicles, water accesses, water trails, recreational areas, forest campgrounds, forest trails, and other programs for strategic statewide program development, monitoring, evaluation and continuous improvement. Ronald Potter oversees a variety of professional program staff.

Organization Description

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources Parks and Trails Division's vision is to create unforgettable park, trail, and water recreation experiences that inspire the public to pass along the love for the outdoor to the next generation. More information on the Minnesota DNR can be found at www.dnr.state.mn.us.

