

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

Subd: 04w

Project Title: Land and Water Conservation Account (LAWCON) Federal Reimbursement

Category: D. Land Acquisition for Habitat and Recreation

Total Project Budget: \$ 750,000

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

Other Non-State Funds (secured): \$

Summary:

The request supports DNR personnel and administrative costs required to maintain eligibility for future LAWCON funding and fulfill the state's contractual obligations related to \$70 million in federal investments.

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Sponsoring Organization: DNR

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Location:

Region: Statewide

Ecological Section:

County Name: Statewide

City / Township:

2011-2012 Main Proposal

PROJECT TITLE: LAWCON Federal Reimbursement

I. PROJECT STATEMENT

The Land and Water Conservation Fund (LAWCON) program has had a major impact on the outdoor recreation infrastructure of Minnesota, with investments of about \$70 million in the state's outdoor recreation system, most of it during the late 1960s to mid-1980s. State and local funds more than matched this amount. Adjusted for inflation, the total investment is in the hundreds of millions of dollars. It has funded projects in 68 state parks, recreation areas and waysides; 35 state forest campgrounds; 20 state scientific and natural areas; 16 public access sites; 12 wildlife management areas; seven state wild and scenic rivers; and five state trails and hundreds of local government park projects throughout the state.

The LCCMR has had a long-standing relationship with this program dating back to the Minnesota Resources Commission in the 1960s. One of the main responsibilities of that predecessor commission was to recommend projects to be funded with LAWCON funds and state matching funds. Since then the commissions which eventually evolved into the LCCMR have provided review of the program of the administering state agency. The Department of Natural Resources has administered the program and served as the liaison to the federal administrators since 1993.

LAWCON dollars are apportioned to states on an annual basis and provide 50% reimbursement for state and local government expenditures for outdoor recreation projects. The 50% for local projects is appropriated by statute and is distributed through a competitive grant program by the Department of Natural Resources. The reimbursements for state projects are deposited in the State Land and Water Conservation Account in the Natural Resources Fund. These funds are then apportioned every two years as specified in M. S. 116P.14 for state land acquisition and development for the State Outdoor Recreation System under Chapter 86A and for the administrative expenses necessary to maintain eligibility for federal LAWCON funding.

This proposal is based on the FY 2010 federal LAWCON apportionment and an estimate of the FY 2011 apportionment. This budget estimate may be adjusted in fall of 2010 based on final appropriation action in Congress.

II. DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT ACTIVITIES

Activity 1: State Projects **Budget:** \$425,000

One or more state projects within the State Outdoor Recreation System will be selected for funding. The projects may involve land acquisition, facility development or both. Examples of some previously funded projects include acquisition of the Vermillion WMA, resurfacing a portion of the Luce Line State Trail, Acquisition of the Avon Hills Forest SNA, construction of an accessible route to the falls in Minneopa State Park, and purchase of accessible picnic tables and fire grates for several state parks.

Outcome	Completion Date
1. Select project or projects	Fall, 2011
2. Complete project or projects	June, 2014

Activity 2: Administrative Expenses Necessary to Maintain Eligibility for the Federal Land and Water Conservation Fund. **Budget:** \$325,000

The requested budget will support DNR personnel and administrative costs required not only to maintain eligibility for future LAWCON funding, but also to fulfill the state’s contractual obligations to ensure that the \$70 million in federal investments in state and local outdoor recreation made over the past 45 years are properly and fully carried out. This includes staff time required to implement an annual grant solicitation, an open project selection process, processing reimbursement requests and payments, pre and post completion project inspections, long term project monitoring that includes hundreds of project inspections per year, submitting required reports and updates to the National Park Service, and processing conversions when requests are made to change the use of assisted project areas. It also includes staff time and expenses needed to begin planning and research for the next State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP), which must be submitted to the National Park Service for review and approval by the end of calendar year 2012.

The SCORP gives state, regional and local outdoor recreation decision-makers and managers a focused set of priorities and suggested actions to guide them as they make decisions about outdoor recreation. The National Park Service requires this plan to maintain Minnesota’s eligibility to participate in the federal LAWCON program. SCORPs must be updated and revised every five years. The previous SCORP planning process included the first statewide survey of the general public regarding outdoor recreation activities in twenty years. Outdoor recreation providers were also surveyed for their opinions on facility needs. The SCORP has been helpful in focusing efforts and investments, particularly for some competitive grant programs.

These funds will support a portion of personnel and administrative costs for three Local Grants Section staff.

Outcome	Completion Date
1. Complete required SCORP	Spring, 2013
2. Administer two annual LAWCON apportionments	June, 2014
3. Administer previous LAWCON grants	June, 2014

III. PROJECT STRATEGY

A. Project Team/Partners

It is possible that other state or local funds may be involved in state projects funded through this project.

B. Timeline Requirements

This is an ongoing program. The Department of natural resources has the ongoing responsibility, through agreements with the federal government and with numerous local governments, to monitor all previously funded projects, administer annual apportionments, and complete the State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) every five years.

C. Long-Term Strategy and Future Funding Needs

As stated in the LAWCON program manual, the long-term strategy of this federally funded program is to stimulate a nationwide action program to assist in preserving, developing, and assuring to all citizens of the United States of present and future generations such quality and quantity of outdoor recreation resources as may be available and are necessary and desirable for individual active participation. The program provides matching grants to states, and through states to local units of governments, for the acquisition and development of public outdoor recreation sites and facilities. Assisted sites must be maintained for public outdoor recreation use in perpetuity.

2011-2012 DETAILED PROJECT BUDGET

IV. TOTAL STATE LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION ACCOUNT REQUEST BUDGET:

BUDGET ITEM	AMOUNT
Personnel: Local Grants Section project staff	\$124,800
Local Grants Section project staff	\$124,800
Local Grants Section manager	\$41,600
State Project (s): Facility development or acquisition (to be determined)	\$425,000
Additional Budget Items: SCORP research, planning and development	\$31,200
Project inspection costs: transportation, lodging, meals, etc.	\$2,600
TOTAL PROJECT BUDGET REQUEST TO LCCMR	\$750,000

V. OTHER FUNDS

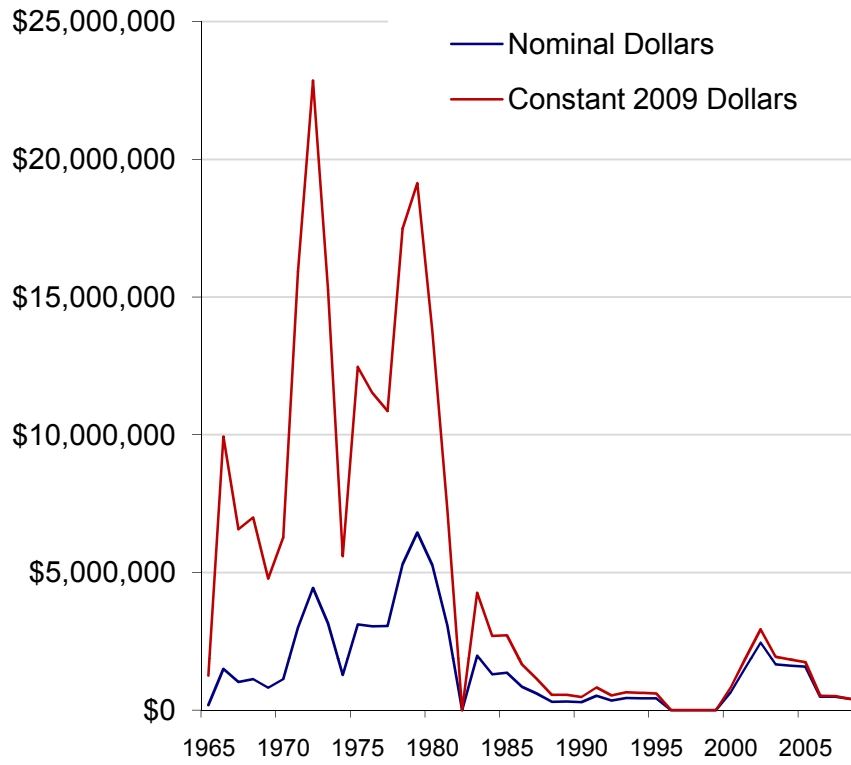
SOURCE OF FUNDS	AMOUNT	STATUS
Other Non-State \$ Being Applied to Project During project Period:	\$0	
Other State \$ Being Applied to Project During Project Period:	\$0	
In-Kind Services During Project Period:	\$0	
Remaining \$ From Current LAWCON Appropriation (if applicable): From the 2009 LAWCON appropriation of \$400,000 (this includes proposed use of \$150,000 for Split Rock Lighthouse State Park and \$20,000 for Wild and Scenic Rivers LAWCON funded scenic easements).	\$185,840	Began draw down July 1, 2010
Funding History: \$400,000 appropriated in 2009 from the State Land and Water Conservation Account.	\$400,000	See above

State Land and Water Conservation Account Balance

1. Balance After the 2005 Appropriation:	52,000
2. FFY 2006/2007	
• FFY 2006 added to account: 245,656.5	
• FFY 2007 added to account: <u>245,656.5</u>	
Total added to account: 491,313	+ <u>491,313</u> 543,313
3. 2007 State Appropriation:	500,000
4. Account Balance After 2007 Appropriation:	43,313
5. FFY 2008/2009	
• FFY 2008 added to account: 202,727.5	
• FFY 2009 added to account: <u>238,224.5</u>	
Total added to account: 440,952	+ <u>440,952</u> 484,265
6. 2009 State Appropriation:	400,000
7. Account Balance After 2009 Appropriation:	84,265
8. Returned to Account From 2007 Appropriation:	12,156
9. Balance Before 2010/2011 Additions:	96,421
8. FFY 2010/2011	
• FFY 2010 added to account: 334,725	
• FFY 2011 added to account: <u>334,725*</u>	
Total added to account: 669,450	+ <u>669,450</u> 765,871
9. Proposed Appropriation Amount:	750,000
10. Proposed Balance:	15,871

* FFY 2011 estimate – probably less than actual

LAWCON Apportionments to Minnesota 1965-2009



Source: Minnesota Department of Natural Resources

116P.14 FEDERAL LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUNDS.

Subdivision 1. **Designated agency.** The Department of Natural Resources is designated as the state agency to apply for, accept, receive, and disburse federal reimbursement funds and private funds, which are granted to the state of Minnesota from section 6 of the federal Land and Water Conservation Fund Act.

Subd. 2. **State land and water conservation account; creation.** A state land and water conservation account is created in the natural resources fund. All of the money made available to the state from funds granted under subdivision 1 shall be deposited in the state land and water conservation account.

Subd. 3. **Local share.** Fifty percent of all money made available to the state from funds granted under subdivision 1 shall be distributed for projects to be acquired, developed, and maintained by local units of government, providing that any project approved is consistent with a statewide or a county or regional recreational plan and compatible with the statewide recreational plan. All money received by the commissioner for local units of government is appropriated annually to carry out the purposes for which the funds are received.

Subd. 4. **State share.** Fifty percent of the money made available to the state from funds granted under subdivision 1 shall be used for state land acquisition and development for the state outdoor recreation system under chapter 86A and the administrative expenses necessary to maintain eligibility for the federal land and water conservation fund.

History: *1Sp2001 c 2 s 140; 2003 c 128 art 1 s 152,153*