



Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund (ENRTF)

M.L. 2015 Work Plan

Date of Report: October 15, 2014

Date of Next Status Update Report: January 1, 2016

Date of Work Plan Approval:

Project Completion Date: June 30, 2018

Does this submission include an amendment request? No_

PROJECT TITLE: Mesabi Trail Development Soudan to Ely - Phase II

Project Manager: Robert Manzoline

Organization: St. Louis and Lake Counties Regional Railroad Authority

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Location: Within St. Louis County generally located between Soudan and the City of Ely and more specifically; from 11 miles east of Soudan to the City of Ely.

Total ENRTF Project Budget:

ENRTF Appropriation: \$1,000,000

Amount Spent: \$0

Balance: \$1,000,000

Legal Citation: M.L. 2015, Chp. 76, Sec. 2, Subd. 09i

Appropriation Language:

\$1,000,000 the first year is from the trust fund to the commissioner of natural resources for an agreement with the St. Louis and Lake Counties Regional Railroad Authority for the right-of-way acquisition, design, and construction of segments of the Mesabi Trail totaling approximately seven miles between Soudan and Ely. This appropriation is available until June 30, 2018, by which time the project must be completed and final products delivered.

I. PROJECT TITLE: Mesabi Trail Development Soudan to Ely Phase 2

II. PROJECT STATEMENT:

The Mesabi Trail is a 145 mile paved trail that serves as an alternate transportation corridor namely for non-motorized pedestrian, bike, ski, horses, and motorized snowmobile use where designated. The trail extends from the Mississippi River in Grand Rapids to the Boundary Waters Canoe Area in Ely. Approximately 118 miles of the trail has been constructed since its inception in 1996. The Mesabi Trail is owned and maintained by the ST. Louis and Lake Counties Regional Railroad Authority (RRA).

The Soudan to Ely Segment is 18 miles in length that has been divided into 2 phases. Phase 1 begins in Soudan and ends 11 east of Soudan. **Phase 2** begins 11 miles east of Soudan and ends in Ely. **Phase 2** length is 7 miles.

Phase 1 is funded in part by a 2014 Environmental & Natural Resources grant and we happy to report that 3 trail miles of this phase were constructed in year 2014.

Phase 2 begins at the former DM& IR Railroad underpass of Highway 1/169 located 11 miles east of Soudan and ending in Ely. The former DM&IR railroad underpass was removed in year 2013 and replaced MN Dot with a 12' x 12' concrete underpass that will allow for the Mesabi Trail to pass under Hwy 1/169 at this location. **Phase 2** is planned to utilize the abandon railroad road grade, however, some sections of the abandon grade have been purchased and developed by private owners. Approximately one-half of this project will be located on the abandon grade and the other one-half using government or private lands and road rights-of-way. Alternate trail routes around private ownerships will necessary. Trail easements will be acquired along the entire 7 mile long route consisting of approximately 25 land parcels.

This trail will provide for a non-motorized transportation corridor along a heavily traveled portion of Highway 169. The trail will address existing traffic safety concerns, provide for more healthy lifestyles, allow for handicapped accessibility and will be constructed in a sensitive manner in order to avoid potential impacts to adjacent land owners. The trail is designed and constructed in accordance with the MN Dot Bicycle Design Manual.

St. Louis and Lake Counties Regional Railroad Authority (RRA) will perform the trail development work including liaison with agencies & local jurisdictions, public meetings, contract administration, assist right-of-way acquisition and other administrative functions. RRA's work is not part of this grant request and has not sought administration reimbursement through any grant source. The RRA is experienced at leveraging funds, meeting specific funder requirements, matching non-state & non-federal sources and completion dates. In addition to ENRTF funds, RRA will be seeking federal and other funds to complete this trail segment.

III. OVERALL PROJECT STATUS UPDATES:

Project Status as of January 1, 2016

Project Status as of July 1, 2016

Project Status as of January 1, 2017

Project Status as of July 1, 2017

Project Status as of January 1, 2018

Project Status as of July 1, 2018

Overall Project Outcomes and Results:

IV. PROJECT ACTIVITIES AND OUTCOMES:

ACTIVITY 1:

Description: Environmental Work for compliance with the Federal National Environmental Policy Act and State of Minnesota Environmental Protection Act involving those compliance agencies namely the Federal Environmental Protection Agency, Federal Highway Administration, Federal Fish & Wildlife and MN Department of Natural Resources, MN Department of Transportation and MN State Historic Preservation Office

Other oversight agencies that will likely become involved include the Federal Army Corps of Engineers and the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency and the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources and the Local Board of Soil and Water Conservation.

The environmental work will be supported by engineering and surveying to locate alternative routes, locations of cultural resources, wetlands and land ownership and land use.

Estimated environmental costs will be approximately 10% of the total project cost or \$100,000. Work will be performed by a person or firm accredited by the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) hereafter known as “Consultant”. Consultant will perform work needed to comply with NEPA and MEPA documenting trail route alternatives, cultural resource identification, wetland delineation & mitigation, fish & wildlife, endangered species, social impacts, economic impacts, state waters impacts, land use (4f) and other. Consultant will further evaluate and assure compliance with local ordinances, planning, zoning and codes.

In the event wetlands or designated waters cannot be avoided and a disturbance takes place, impacted wetlands will need to be replaced at a ratio of 1.5:1 (1.5 = new wetlands created; 1 = wetlands impacted) Wetland replacement is overseen by BWSR and typically performed by purchasing wetland credits from the MN State Wetland Bank. Cost for wetland credits does vary, however; Mesabi Trail did purchase wetland credits on January 31, 2014 at a cost of \$1.00 per square foot or \$43,560 per one acre.

If this budget amount is not used for environmental work, a request will be made to shift remaining funds to Activity 4, Construction.

Summary Budget Information for Activity 1:

ENRTF Budget: \$ 100,000
Amount Spent \$ 0
Balance 100,000

Detailed budget

Route Alternative Analysis	8,000
Historic/Cultural Resource	19,000
Social, economic & environmental effects	12,000
Agency coordination	6,000
Reports, notices & hearings	15,000
Engineering	5,000
Wetland delineation & mitigation ½ acre	<u>35,000</u>
Total	100,000

Outcomes	Completion Date
Route Alternatives Analysis: investigate route alternatives based on social, economic & environmental criteria with the outcome of a “Preferred Route”	July 2017
Historic/Cultural Resource: Cultural resource Phase I historic review and field survey will include obtaining permits and licenses, review of historic documents and including	

<p>contact with the following agencies: Minnesota Historical Society, National Historic Landmarks, MN Department of Natural Resources, St. Louis County Historical Society, Duluth Public Library, University of MN Duluth, Ely-Winton Historical Society, MN State Historic Preservation Office, Tribal and others. A field survey of the entire route will be conducted using aerial mapping and GPS coordination. Lab analysis will be performed on artifacts if collected. Reports will be generated and permits sought from those agencies with jurisdiction over this project.</p>	
<p>Social, Economic and Environmental effects: will include air quality, cost/benefit analysis, construction impacts, contaminated properties or materials, critical areas, energy impacts, erosion control, farmland protection, fish and wildlife. Groundwater, handicapped accessibility, land use impacts, noise analysis, recreational lands (4f), right-of-way, social impacts, environmental impacts, streams and waterways, threatened or endangered species, tribal lands, vegetation, visual impacts water quality, wild and scenic rivers.</p>	
<p>Agency Coordination: Contact and coordination with those agencies responsible for oversight and permitting project activities effecting their jurisdiction including but not limited to the MN Department of Natural Resources, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, St. Louis County, Minnesota Historical Society, Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, Minnesota Department of Transportation, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, MN Board of Soil and Water Conservation, others.</p>	
<p>Reports, notices & hearings: will include correspondence, forms, and application submittals to agencies having jurisdiction over development of this project most as listed above under "Agency Coordination". In addition, public hearings, public reviews and public comments will be held and received along with attending meetings and receiving approvals from City Councils, Township Boards, County Board and local, county, state planning and zoning commissions.</p>	
<p>Wetland delineation & mitigation: will include field survey, mapping and reporting to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, U.S. Environmental Pollution Agency and State of MN board of Water & Soil Resources (BWSR). It is estimated that ½ acre of wetlands will be impacted leading to a mitigation by way of purchasing wetland credits from the MN Wetland Bank administered by BWSR</p>	
<p>Final Outcome: will be a project compliant with Federal and State environmental rules and laws documented within written reports accepted by those agencies with the responsibility to oversee this project and to secure those permits, licenses and approvals necessary to construct this project. All work will be conducted by professional environmentalists and archaeologists licensed by the State of MN.</p>	

Activity Status as of January 1, 2016

Activity Status as of July 30, 2016

Activity Status as of January 1, 2017

Activity Status as of July 1, 2017 and final activity report

ACTIVITY 2: Description: Right-of-Way Acquisition

ENRTF Budget: \$50,000
Amount Spent: \$0
Balance: \$50,000

Acquire right-of-way in sufficient width for trail construction by way of recreational trail easements and licenses. The minimum right-of-way width is forty feet. Land purchase is not anticipated but if needed, will follow requirements of Section VIII of this Work Plan. Right-of-way work includes land surveys, legal descriptions, title searches and recording of approximately 25 land parcels. Estimated cost per easement/license is \$2,000 for work performed by a registered land surveyor and attorney.

Outcome	Completion Date
Acquire approximately 7 miles or 37,000 lineal feet by 40 feet wide right-of-way estimated to contain 50 land acres. Right-of-way will be obtained from private, corporate and government land owners.	July 2017

Activity Status as of January 1, 2016

Activity Status as of July 30, 2016

Activity Status as of January 1, 2017

Activity Status as of July 30, 2017 and final activity report

Activity 3 Description: Engineering design, survey, plans, specification and construction management.

ENRTF Budget:	\$150,000
Amount Spent:	\$0
Balance:	\$150,000

Engineering will be done in accordance with the MN Dot Standards for Bicycle Trails. Engineering work begins with route(s) identification and support of environmental work and then to more specific survey work once a preferred trail route alternative is selected. The project engineer will also design the trail in accordance with MN Dot, Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and ASHTO standards while taking into account on-site conditions such as waterways, wetlands, hills, valleys and other features to determine the final trail location and design.

Engineering work will include preparation of a MN Dot Project Memorandum that documents project elements including section 4(f) lands, historic, endangered species, right-of-way, farmlands, section 404, floodplains, wetlands and other.

Engineer will provided a construction plan and specification, bidding documents, contracts, construction management, on-site inspections, testing oversight and other functions needed for a completed project

Engineering costs are estimated to be 15% of the total project cost or \$150,000 with a not to exceed 20% of the total project cost. Engineering work will be performed by a person or firm licensed by the State of Minnesota.

Outcome	Completion Date
Prepare maps and support project/public meetings	July 2018
Conduct field surveys to support preparation of plans	
Prepare project plans and specifications	
Prepare bidding documents and contracts	
Inspect and manage construction	
Sampling and testing in accordance with Federal Highway Administration	

Activity Status as of January 1, 2016

Activity Status as of July 30, 2016

Activity Status as of January 1, 2017

Activity Status as of July 1, 2017

Activity Status as of January 1, 2018

Activity Status as of July 1, 2018 and final activity report

Activity 4 Description: Trail Construction	ENRTF Budget:	\$700,000
	Amount Spent:	\$0
	Balance:	\$700,000

Construction of a 10’ wide bituminous surfaced trail in accordance with the MN Dot Standards for Bicycle Trails. Trail construction will include 2’ wide gravel shoulders, base preparation, grading, gravel base, ditch ways, slopes, culverts, fencing, signing, landscaping, seeding and all else necessary for a complete trail. Construction will be performed by a licensed and bonded contractor selected according to the MN State public bidding laws.

Outcome	Completion Date
<p>Construct 7 miles of bituminous surface trail where described under “Location” of this Work Plan. Work will consist of constructing a 10 feet wide bituminous surface trail with 2 feet wide gravel shoulders amounting to approximately 4,106 square yards of bituminous mat with a compacted thickness of 2.5 inches. The bituminous surface will be set upon a 4 inch thick compacted gravel base that extends 2 lineal feet beyond either side of the bituminous mat. The gravel base sets upon a prepared sub –base. Construction will include drainage courses both lateral too and crossing the trail made up of ditch ways and culverts to shed water in keeping with the natural drainage courses. Other project elements also include clearing, grubbing, slope grading, seeding, signs, fencing and erosion control.</p>	<p>July 2018</p>

Activity Status as of January 1, 2016

Activity Status as of July 30, 2016

Activity Status as of January 1, 2017

Activity Status as of July 1, 2017

Activity Status as of January 1, 2018

Activity Status as of July 1, 2018 and final activity report

V. DISSEMINATION:

Description: Mesabi Trail news and updates are provided through a variety of media, marketing and publications. Web site is: Mesabitrail.com. The following are some of the groups & organizations that disseminate Mesabi Trail information and typically include updates of newly completed trail segments and activities:

- Club Mesabi (10,000 maps & web site)
- Iron Range Tourism (30,000 brochures & web site)
- MN Office of Tourism
- ampers radio
- Parks & Trails, Home & Away, other private magazines
- 180,000 trail users per year
- Yearly “Mesabi Trail Tour” 700 registered riders
- Named by the Star Tribune as “Best of Minnesota” in year 2013
- Named by Bicycle Magazine as” top 10 in the country”

Final Report Summary:

VI. PROJECT BUDGET SUMMARY:

A. ENRTF Budget Overview:

Budget Category	\$ Amount	Overview Explanation
Professional/Technical/Service Contracts:	\$100,000	For environmental services described under Activity 1.
Professional/Technical/Service Contracts:	\$ 150,000	For engineering services described under Activity 3.
Capital Expenditures over \$5,000:	\$ 700,000	For trail construction described under Activity 4
Professional Services for Acquisition:	\$ 50,000	For trail right-of-way described under Activity 2
TOTAL ENRTF BUDGET:	\$ 1,000,000	

Explanation of Use of Classified Staff: RRA provides staff for Mesabi Trail development

Explanation of Capital Expenditures Greater Than \$5,000: Cost for constructing a 10’ wide bituminous surface trail exceed \$100,000 per mile.

Number of Full-time Equivalent (FTE) Directly Funded with this ENRTF Appropriation:

Number of Full-time Equivalent (FTE) Estimated to Be Funded through Contracts with this ENRTF Appropriation: 7 FTE’s

B. Other Funds:

Source of Funds	\$ Amount Proposed	\$ Amount Spent	Use of Other Funds
Non-state			
Federal TAP Funds FY 2017 & 2018 are pending	\$ 800,000	\$ 0	trail construction matched at a rate of 80% federal to 20% non-federal
State Legacy funds will be sought for this project FY 2018	\$500,000	\$0	Construction & engineering services
TOTAL OTHER FUNDS:	\$1,300,000	\$0	

VII. PROJECT STRATEGY:

A. Project Partners:

Lead - St. Louis and Lake Counties Regional Railroad Authority with assistance from St. Louis County Public Works

Local Assistance – Eagles Nest Townships, Morse Township, City of Ely, St. Louis County Land Department, MN DNR Forestry, USDA

Trail Development Contributors – COE, BWSR, MNDOT, St. Louis County Land Department

Project Impact and Long-term Strategy: Long-term strategy for the Mesabi Trail has not changed since 1995 which is to construct a trail from Grand Rapids to Ely connecting 26 communities along the way as seen on enclosed map. A key component in this strategy is to maintain the completed trail as some parts/segments will be over 20 years old by the time the overall trail is finished. The Regional Railroad Authority has committed to maintain the trail and currently budgets over \$300,000 per year for maintenance costs.

Short-term impacts make local trails connections between communities and destinations.

C. Funding History:

Funding Source and Use of Funds	Funding Timeframe	\$ Amount
1993: ML 93 Chap. 172, Sec. 14, Subd. 10(r)		700,000
1995: ML 95, Chap. 220, Sec. 19, Subd. 4(g)		150,000
1996: MS Chap. 463, Sec. 7, Subd. 14		500,000
1997: ML 1997, Chap. 216, Sec. 15, Subd. 18		600,000
1999: ML 1999, Chap. 231, Sec. 16, Subd. 4b		1,000,000
2001: ML 2001, 1 st Special Session, Chap. 2, Sec. 14, Subd. 05		190,000
2003: ML 2003, Chap. 128, Article 1, Sec. 9, Subd. 6h		380,000
2005: ML 2005, First Special Session, Art. 2, Sec.11, Subd. 6(m)		1,000,000
2006: ML 2006, Chapter 258, Sec. 7, Subd. 23		950,000
2011: ML 2011, 1 st Special Session, Chap. 6, Art. 3, Sec. 3, Subd. c(1)		512,000
2013: ML 2013, Chap. 137, Art. 3, Sec. 3, Subd. C4		1,250,000
2014: ML 2014, Chap. 226, Sec. 2, Subd. 07c		1,000,000
Federal HPP 2005 to present		2,900,000
Federal ARRA 2009		1,200,000
Federal Enh. 2005 to present		1,382,000
Federal Enh. 1995 to 2005		3,000,000
Local, IRRRB, RRA, SLC 1994 to 2014		3,000,000

VIII. FEE TITLE ACQUISITION/CONSERVATION EASEMENT/RESTORATION REQUIREMENTS: N/A

A. Parcel List:

B. Acquisition/Restoration Information: N/A

IX. VISUAL COMPONENT or MAP(S): see attached

X. RESEARCH ADDENDUM: N/A

XI. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS:

Periodic work plan status update reports will be submitted no later than:

Project Status as of January 1, 2016

Project Status as of July 1, 2016


Project Status as of January 1, 2017

Project Status as of July 1, 2017

Project Status as of January 1, 2018

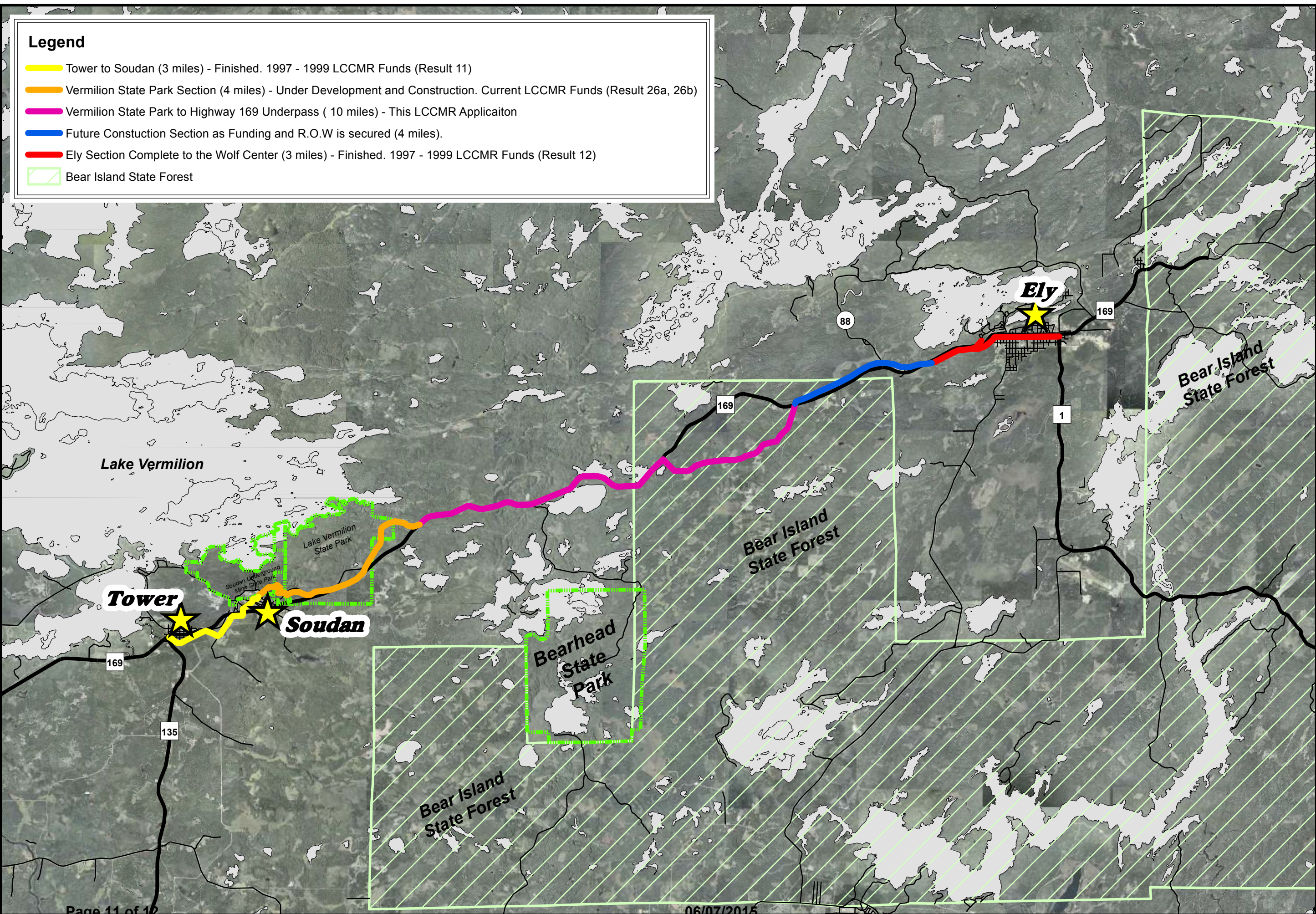
Project Status as of July 1, 2018

Overall Project Outcomes and Results: a final report and associated products will be submitted between June 30 and August 15, 2018.

Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund											
M.L. 2014 Project Budget											
Project Title: Mesabi Trail Development Soudan to Ely - Phase II											
Legal Citation: M.L. 2014, Chapter 226, sec. 2, Subd. 07c											
Project Manager: Bob Manzoline											
Organization: St. Louis and Lake Counties Regional Railroad Authority											
M.L. 2014 ENRTF Appropriation: \$ 1,000,000											
Project Length and Completion Date: June 30, 2017											
Date of Report: January 15, 2014											
ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES TRUST FUND BUDGET											
	Activity 1 Budget	Amount Spent	Activity 1 Balance	Activity 2 Budget	Amount Spent	Activity 2 Balance	Activity 3 Budget	Amount Spent	Activity 3 Balance	TOTAL BUDGET	TOTAL BALANCE
BUDGET ITEM	NEPA/Environmental/R-O-W			Engineering			Construction				
Professional Service Contracts											
Environmental work preliminary to construction in accordance with Federal NEPA & EPA; Minnesota MPCA, SHIPO, DNR; Local jurisdictions as explained under Work Plan ACTIVITY 1	\$100,000	\$0	\$100,000							\$100,000	\$100,000
Engineer for trail design, plans, specifications, bidding and construction administration as explained under Work Plan ACTIVITY 2				\$150,000	\$0	\$150,000				\$150,000	\$150,000
Capital Expenditures Over \$5,000 (List specific items. Add rows as needed.)											
Trail construction of Results 26b, 31 & 32 as further explained Work Plan ACTIVITY 3							\$750,000	\$0	\$750,000	\$750,000	\$750,000
COLUMN TOTAL	\$100,000	\$0	\$100,000	\$150,000	\$0	\$150,000	\$750,000	\$0	\$750,000	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000

Legend

- Tower to Soudan (3 miles) - Finished. 1997 - 1999 LCCMR Funds (Result 11)
- Vermilion State Park Section (4 miles) - Under Development and Construction. Current LCCMR Funds (Result 26a, 26b)
- Vermilion State Park to Highway 169 Underpass (10 miles) - This LCCMR Application
- Future Constuction Section as Funding and R.O.W is secured (4 miles).
- Ely Section Complete to the Wolf Center (3 miles) - Finished. 1997 - 1999 LCCMR Funds (Result 12)
- Bear Island State Forest



**Mesabi Trail
Tower Minnesota to
Ely, Minnesota**



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Phone: 218.322.4500

REGRA COMMON

Date:
10/02/13

Sheet 1 of 1
Sub 091

