

Final Abstract

Final Report Approved on August 12, 2024

M.L. 2020 Project Abstract

For the Period Ending June 30, 2023

Project Title: Contract Agreement Reimbursement

Project Manager: Katherine Sherman-Hoehn

Affiliation: MN DNR - Grants Unit

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Website: <https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/grants/passthrough/index.html>

Funding Source:

Fiscal Year:

Legal Citation: M.L. 2021, First Special Session, Chp. 6, Art. 5, Sec. 2, Subd. 11

Appropriation Amount: \$135,000

Amount Spent: \$135,000

Amount Remaining: -

Sound bite of Project Outcomes and Results

This appropriation was used to support the ENRTF contract management program, which ensured that ENRTF grantees expended grant funds in compliance with state law, session law, approved work plans, and Office of Grants Management grants policies.

Overall Project Outcome and Results

This appropriation was used to support the ENRTF contract management program, which ensured that ENRTF grantees expended grant funds in compliance with state law, session law, approved work plans, and Office of Grants Management grants policies.

The DNR Grants Unit managed 72 grants active in FY 2021. In FY 2022, the Grants Unit managed 116 active grants. Between July 1, 2020 and June 30 2022, the DNR Grants Unit:

- Made 296 reimbursements to grantees totaling 16.122 million dollars.
- Finished implementation of fully electronic contract and payment request process, and implemented a streamlined reimbursement process for low-risk organizations
- Monitored all grants in compliance with Office of Grants Management policies.

Project Results Use and Dissemination

Project personnel were in frequent contact with appropriation recipients and LCCMR staff. Information was disseminated through manuals, training sessions, orientations, meetings, memos, letters, emails, newsletter, and phone.



Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund

M.L. 2020 Approved Final Report

General Information

Date: November 8, 2024

ID Number: 2020-008

Staff Lead: Becca Nash

Project Title: Contract Agreement Reimbursement

Project Budget: \$135,000

Project Manager Information

Name: Katherine Sherman-Hoehn

Organization: MN DNR - Grants Unit

Office Telephone: (651) 259-5533

Email: katherine.sherman-hoehn@state.mn.us

Web Address: <https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/grants/passthrough/index.html>

Project Reporting

Final Report Approved: August 12, 2024

Reporting Status: Project Completed

Date of Last Action: August 12, 2024

Project Completion: September 30, 2022

Legal Information

Legal Citation: M.L. 2021, First Special Session, Chp. 6, Art. 5, Sec. 2, Subd. 11

Appropriation Language: \$135,000 the second year is from the trust fund to the commissioner of natural resources, at the direction of the Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources, for expenses incurred for preparing and administering contracts for the agreements specified in this section. The commissioner must provide documentation to the Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources on the expenditure of these funds.

Appropriation End Date: June 30, 2024

Narrative

Project Summary: Provide contract management to ENRTF pass-through appropriation recipients for approximately 60 open grants. Ensure funds are expended in compliance with appropriation law, state statute, grants policies, and approved work plans.

Describe the opportunity or problem your proposal seeks to address. Include any relevant background information.

Provide continued contract management services to pass-through recipients of Environment and Natural Resource Trust Fund (ENRTF) dollars appropriated to the commissioner of natural resources.

What is your proposed solution to the problem or opportunity discussed above? Introduce us to the work you are seeking funding to do. You will be asked to expand on this proposed solution in Activities & Milestones.

The appropriation will be used to continue and enhance contract management services to pass-through recipients of ENRTF appropriations to the Commissioner of Natural Resources. The goal of contract management is to ensure that grantees are properly reimbursed and that organizations operate in compliance with ENRTF pass-through appropriation procedures, policies from the Department of Administration's Grants Management, ENRTF statute, and the recommendations of the Legislative Auditor. Contract management includes: grant agreements and amendments, training, technical assistance, reporting, fiscal monitoring, reimbursement request processing, and close-out of grants.

What are the specific project outcomes as they relate to the public purpose of protection, conservation, preservation, and enhancement of the state's natural resources?

The OMBS Grants Unit's goal is to provide pass-through recipients with the contract management, technical assistance, and grant monitoring they need to successfully complete their conservation work. The Grants Unit provides grantees with one consistent point of contact for their agreements and delivers timely, responsive, customer service.

Project Location

What is the best scale for describing where your work will take place?

Statewide

What is the best scale to describe the area impacted by your work?

Statewide

When will the work impact occur?

During the Project

Activities and Milestones

Activity 1: Contract Management

Activity Budget: \$135,000

Activity Description:

The Grants Unit manages grant agreements for special environment and natural resource projects recommended by LCCMR and appropriated by the legislature to ensure that all projects operate in compliance with state and LCCMR requirements. Services include:

Contract Management

- o Meeting statutory and Office of Grants Management (OGM) requirements for grant agreements, including contract creation, payment requests, monitoring, and closeout
- o Processing reimbursement requests promptly, in compliance with state and DNR policies and LCCMR-approved workplan
- o Working closely with and responding to requests from the Office of the Legislative Auditor
- o Developing and maintaining accurate reports on Trust fund and individual project status
- o Working cooperatively with LCCMR staff and recipients to resolve questions and make changes
- o Improving processes to increase efficiency and ease for recipients while ensuring fiscal integrity

Training and Ongoing Communication

- o Training recipients on state requirements to ensure they understand the state's contract and reimbursement procedures and requirements
- o Providing ongoing technical assistance and one-on-one work with recipients where necessary
- o Responding to LCCMR requests for information or assistance

The Grants Unit uses a professional service rate to charge for work, with expenses charged only for actual hours worked and services delivered.

Activity Milestones:

Description	Approximate Completion Date
Complete ML21 Grant Agreements	August 31, 2021
Complete FY22 Monitoring	June 30, 2022

Dissemination

Describe your plans for dissemination, presentation, documentation, or sharing of data, results, samples, physical collections, and other products and how they will follow ENRTF Acknowledgement Requirements and Guidelines.

Minnesota Department of Natural Resources Grants Unit staff are in frequent contact with ENRTF pass-through appropriation recipients through phone calls, emails, letters, training, surveys, quarterly newsletters, and manuals. In addition, a website with grantee resources can be found here:

<http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/grants/passthrough/index.html>

Long-Term Implementation and Funding

Describe how the results will be implemented and how any ongoing effort will be funded. If not already addressed as part of the project, how will findings, results, and products developed be implemented after project completion? If additional work is needed, how will this work be funded?

The Grants Unit will continue contract management through existing policies and procedures, including Office of Grants Management policies; procedures laid out in ENRTF statute, appropriation language, and workplans; and in Grants Unit policies and procedures laid out in attachments to grantee contracts.

The Grants Unit will continue to track contract management activities and metrics through its database and through state-mandated file retention procedures, and communicate any relevant findings to LCCMR staff. Additional work would be funded with future appropriations.

Other ENRTF Appropriations Awarded in the Last Six Years

Name	Appropriation	Amount Awarded
Contract Agreement Reimbursement	M.L. 2014, Chp. 226, Sec. 2, Subd. 10a	\$135,000
Contract Agreement Reimbursement	M.L. 2015, Chp. 76, Sec. 2, Subd. 11b	\$135,000
Contract Agreement Reimbursement	M.L. 2016, Chp. 186, Sec. 2, Subd. 10a	\$135,000
Contract Agreement Reimbursement	M.L. 2017, Chp. 96, Sec. 2, Subd. 10a	\$135,000
Contract Agreement Reimbursement	M.L. 2018, Chp. 214, Art. 4, Sec. 2, Subd. 12	\$135,000
Contract Agreement Reimbursement	M.L. 2019, First Special Session, Chp. 4, Art. 2, Sec. 2, Subd. 10a	\$135,000

Budget Summary

Category / Name	Subcategory or Type	Description	Purpose	Gen. Ineligible	% Benefits	# FTE	Classified Staff?	\$ Amount	\$ Amount Spent	\$ Amount Remaining
Personnel										
							Sub Total	-	-	-
Contracts and Services										
OMBS Grants Unit	Internal services or fees (uncommon)	The Grants Unit manages grant agreements for special environment and natural resource projects recommended by LCCMR and appropriated by the legislature to ensure that all projects operate in compliance with state and LCCMR requirements. Rate for FY21 was \$69.00/hr; we will inform LCCMR staff when it updates.		X		6.86		\$135,000	\$135,000	-
							Sub Total	\$135,000	\$135,000	-
Equipment, Tools, and Supplies										
							Sub Total	-	-	-
Capital Expenditures										
							Sub Total	-	-	-
Acquisitions and Stewardship										
							Sub Total	-	-	-
Travel In Minnesota										
							Sub Total	-	-	-
Travel Outside Minnesota										

							Sub Total	-	-	-
Printing and Publication										
							Sub Total	-	-	-
Other Expenses										
							Sub Total	-	-	-
							Grand Total	\$135,000	\$135,000	-

Classified Staff or Generally Ineligible Expenses

Category/Name	Subcategory or Type	Description	Justification Ineligible Expense or Classified Staff Request
Contracts and Services - OMBS Grants Unit	Internal services or fees (uncommon)	The Grants Unit manages grant agreements for special environment and natural resource projects recommended by LCCMR and appropriated by the legislature to ensure that all projects operate in compliance with state and LCCMR requirements. Rate for FY21 was \$69.00/hr; we will inform LCCMR staff when it updates.	Per agreement with LCCMR.

Non ENRTF Funds

Category	Specific Source	Use	Status	\$ Amount	\$ Amount Spent	\$ Amount Remaining
State						
			State Sub Total	-	-	-
Non-State						
			Non State Sub Total	-	-	-
			Funds Total	-	-	-

Attachments

Required Attachments

Visual Component

File: [778f627f-820.pdf](#)

Alternate Text for Visual Component

Single page showing Contract Management Measures from 2015 to 2019. Two charts, one showing Open Grants per Fiscal Year with a gradual upward trend from 54 to 78. Payments by Fiscal Year showing an upward trend from 2015-2018. Payments were around 140 in 2015 and around 190 in 2018....

Supplemental Attachments

Capital Project Questionnaire, Budget Supplements, Support Letter, Photos, Media, Other

Title	File
Background check form	04c87651-acc.pdf

Difference between Proposal and Work Plan

Describe changes from Proposal to Work Plan Stage

Updated project completion date to July 2023 per staff comments.

Additional Acknowledgements and Conditions:

The following are acknowledgements and conditions beyond those already included in the above workplan:

Do you understand and acknowledge the ENRTF repayment requirements if the use of capital equipment changes?

N/A

Do you agree travel expenses must follow the "Commissioner's Plan" promulgated by the Commissioner of Management of Budget or, for University of Minnesota projects, the University of Minnesota plan?

N/A

Does your project have potential for royalties, copyrights, patents, sale of products and assets, or revenue generation?

No

Do you understand and acknowledge IP and revenue-return and sharing requirements in 116P.10?

N/A

Do you wish to request reinvestment of any revenues into your project instead of returning revenue to the ENRTF?

N/A

Does your project include original, hypothesis-driven research?

No

Does the organization have a fiscal agent for this project?

No

Work Plan Amendments

Amendment ID	Request Type	Changes made on the following pages	Explanation & justification for Amendment Request (word limit 75)	Date Submitted	Approved	Date of LCCMR Action
1	Completion Date	Previous Completion Date: 07/31/2023 New Completion Date: 09/30/2022	Project completed early	May 9, 2023	Yes	May 9, 2023

Status Update Reporting

Final Status Update September 30, 2022

Date Submitted: June 12, 2023

Date Approved: July 24, 2023

Overall Update

This appropriation was spent on contract management activities for FY2020, including management of 78 open grants and payment of approximately 180 reimbursement requests. All work is complete.

Activity 1

This activity was previously marked complete.

(This activity marked as complete as of this status update)

Dissemination

The Grants Unit provided an annual training webinar on the reimbursement manual, and communicated with grantees via the Pass-through grants website, technical assistance, and as requested by the LCCMR.

Status Update Reporting

Status Update April 1, 2023

Date Submitted: May 4, 2023

Date Approved: July 24, 2023

Overall Update

This appropriation was spent on contract management activities for FY2020, including management of 78 open grants and payment of approximately 180 reimbursement requests. All work is complete.

Activity 1

This activity was previously marked complete.

(This activity marked as complete as of this status update)

Dissemination

The Grants Unit provided an annual training webinar on the reimbursement manual, and communicated with grantees via the Pass-through grants website, technical assistance, and as requested by the LCCMR.

Status Update Reporting

Status Update October 1, 2022

Date Submitted: October 10, 2022

Date Approved: October 17, 2022

Overall Update

This appropriation was used to support the ENRTF contract management program, which ensured that ENRTF grantees expended grant funds in compliance with state law, session law, approved work plans, and Office of Grants Management grants policies.

Activity 1

DNR staff created and executed ENRTF amendments and maintained corresponding grant files for 116 open grants. Staff provided training and ongoing technical assistance to appropriation recipients. Staff reviewed and processed reimbursement requests in a timely manner and conducted financial reconciliations and monitoring as required by the Minnesota Department of Administration Office of Grants Management. DNR staff closed out grants in accordance with Office of Grants Management policy and LCCMR requirements.

(This activity marked as complete as of this status update)

Dissemination

Project personnel were in frequent contact with appropriation recipients and LCCMR staff. Information was disseminated through manuals, training sessions, orientations, meetings, memos, letters, emails, newsletter, and phone.

Status Update Reporting

Status Update April 1, 2022

Date Submitted: April 4, 2022

Date Approved: April 7, 2022

Overall Update

Through December 31, 2021, the Grants Unit expended \$66,927.87 while providing contract management activities to 121 open projects.

Activity 1

Activities included management of 121 active grants, completing 42 reimbursement requests for \$2,775,865.92, contract execution on 72 projects in the ML21 Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund bill, and amendment execution on projects extended in the bill. The Unit also provided technical assistance to the LCCMR on several projects.

Dissemination

The Grants Unit is produced its annual reimbursement manual training for grantees and provided other communication with grantees, including technical assistance, training, and publications.