



# Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund (ENRTF)

## M.L. 2020 ENRTF Work Plan (Main Document)

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**Today's Date:** December 2, 2019

**Date of Next Status Update Report:** May 1, 2021

**Date of Work Plan Approval:**

**Project Completion Date:** 6/30/2023

**Does this submission include an amendment request?**

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**PROJECT TITLE:** Minnesota Hunter Walking Trails – Public Land Recreational Access

**Project Manager:** Gary Drotts, Ruffed Grouse Society grant consultant

**Organization:** Ruffed Grouse Society

**College, Department, or Division:** NA

**Mailing Address:** 11964 Executive Acres Rd.

**City, State, Zip Code:** Brainerd, MN 56401

**Project Manager Direct Telephone Number:** 218-232-7740

**Email Address:** [gadrotts@brainerd.net](mailto:gadrotts@brainerd.net)

**Web Address:** [ruffedgrousesociety.org](http://ruffedgrousesociety.org)

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**Location:** Northwest, Northeast, and Central Minnesota (Aitkin, Beltrami, Cass, Clearwater, Crow Wing, Hubbard, Itasca, Koochiching, Lake, Lake of the Woods, Mille Lacs, Morrison, Pine, Roseau, St. Louis, and Wadena).

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**Total Project Budget:** \$300,000

**Amount Spent:** \$0

**Balance:** \$300,000

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**Legal Citation:** M.L. 2020, Chp. xx, Sec. xx, Subd. xx

**Appropriation Language:**

## **PROJECT STATEMENT:**

Approximately 1,000 miles of hunter walking trails (HWTs) exist on ~250 sites within Minnesota's public forest lands. They were designed to provide a non-motorized recreational opportunity for that segment of the public that desires a quieter, foot-travel experience. The goal of this grant proposal as sponsored by the Ruffed Grouse Society is to update a significant portion of that system through: 1) restore and upgrade infrastructure at ~120 trailheads (i.e. parking lots, gates, signs) and ~50 miles of trail (i.e. road bed, width, culverts, etc.); 2) development/construction of ~10 miles of new trails and related trailheads; and, 3) updating of maps for both management and public users.

Currently this statewide system of HWTs is located on State Wildlife Management Area (40%), State Forest (30%), County Forest (20%), and National Forest lands (10%). A majority of these trails were developed through efforts funded by MNDNR Wildlife and NGO/conservation organizations like the Ruffed Grouse Society (RGS). This HWT system was primarily developed in the 1970's-90's as a means to allow hunters to access public land and to improve forest habitats through dispersed timber sales.

HWTs are typically funded by annual operating funds of the controlling land administrator, they do not have a dedicated funding source like other trail users (e.g. grant-in-aid ATV trail fund). This lack of a long-term, dedicated funded source over time has led to a generally degraded system that is overdue for upgrades and improvements. The broad purpose of this request is therefore to ensure that recreational trail opportunities in Minnesota include non-motorized hunter walking trails. These trails will promote the ongoing participation of current hunters, birders and hikers that seek this type of trail experience and also encourage the introduction of new users to upland hunting traditions while also facilitating forest habitat enhancements through access for forest management (e.g. timber harvest).

In preparation for this effort, the Ruffed Grouse Society is currently undertaking a detailed assessment of HWTs across all public forest land administrators in Minnesota. This *2019 Assessment of Hunter Walking Trails in Minnesota* will serve to provide a single dataset and process for public land administrators to prioritize HWT needs, activities and outcomes for this grant. Based on this assessment RGS will also be looking at future Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council and Minnesota Conservation Partners Legacy grant proposals to enhance forest habitats (e.g. young forest, within-stand diversity, legacy patches, etc.) within influence areas of these trails.

## **II. OVERALL PROJECT STATUS UPDATES:**

**First Update:** May 1, 2021

**Second Update:** November 1, 2021

**Third Update:** May 1, 2022

**Fourth Update:** November 1, 2022

**Fifth Update:** May 1, 2023

**Final Report between project end (June 30) and August 15, 2023**

### III. PROJECT ACTIVITIES AND OUTCOMES:

**ACTIVITY 1:** *Restore, upgrade existing hunter walking trail infrastructure at ~120 trailheads and ~50 miles of trails.*

**Description:** Based on needs and priorities identified in the *2019 Assessment of Hunter Walking Trails in Minnesota*, Project Manager will coordinate bid, contract, and supply efforts necessary for trailhead (i.e. parking lots, gates, signs, etc.) and trail (i.e. reshape, widen, culverts, etc.) infrastructure needs based on controlling land administrator's environmental, construction and contracting requirements; document and certify successful accomplishments.

**ACTIVITY 1 ENRTF BUDGET:** \$210,000

Outcome	Completion Date
1. <i>Restore, upgrade ~60 HWT trailheads.</i>	6/30/2021
2. <i>Restore, upgrade ~60 HWT trailheads.</i>	6/30/2022
3. <i>Restore, upgrade ~25 miles of existing trails.</i>	6/30/2021
4. <i>Restore, upgrade ~25 miles of existing trails</i>	6/30/2022

**First Update:** May 1, 2021

**Second Update:** November 1, 2021

**Third Update:** May 1, 2022

**Fourth Update:** November 1, 2022

**Fifth Update:** May 1, 2023

**Final Report between project end (June 30) and August 15, 2023**

**ACTIVITY 2:** *Develop/construct ~12 miles of new hunter walking trails and related trailheads.*

**Description:** Based on needs and priorities identified in the *2019 Assessment of Hunter Walking Trails in Minnesota*, Project Manager will coordinate bid, contract, and supply efforts necessary for development of new hunter walking trails and related trailheads based on controlling land administrator's environmental, construction and contracting requirements; document and certify successful accomplishments.

**ACTIVITY 2 ENRTF BUDGET:** \$50,000

Outcome	Completion Date
1. <i>Construct ~6 miles of new hunter walking trail segments, loops or systems.</i>	12/31/2021
2. <i>Construct ~6 miles of new hunter walking trail segments, loops or systems.</i>	12/31/2022

**First Update:** May 1, 2021

**Second Update:** November 1, 2021

**Third Update:** May 1, 2022

**Fourth Update:** November 1, 2022

**Fifth Update:** May 1, 2023

**Final Report between project end (June 30) and August 15, 2023**

**ACTIVITY 3:** Update, improve hunter walking information necessary for management and public recreational use (~100 trails).

**Description:** Work with public land administrators to update HWT information, data, and related maps as to their specific requirements; link to MNDNR's hunter walking trail webpage.

**ACTIVITY 3 ENRTF BUDGET:** \$40,000

Outcome	Completion Date
1. Ongoing field assessments, information/data gathering, map updates with respective public land administrators, contracted GIS support.	12/31/2022
2. Finalize and complete information and map updates with respective public land administrator, link all to MNDNR's hunter walking trail webpage.	6/30/2023

**First Update:** May 1, 2021

**Second Update:** November 1, 2021

**Third Update:** May 1, 2022

**Fourth Update:** November 1, 2022

**Fifth Update:** May 1, 2023

**Final Report between project end (June 30) and August 15, 2023**

#### **IV. DISSEMINATION:**

##### **Description:**

Grant accomplishments will be communicated with appropriate state, federal, and county land administrators where hunter walking trails have been impacted by this grant. Accomplishments will also be disseminated through updates maps, and links to the MNDNR Hunter Walking Trail webpage. Media outreach will also be undertaken through various news releases/articles in RGS's Covers magazine, Minnesota Outdoor News, and local news outlets.

The Minnesota Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund (ENRTF) will be acknowledged through use of the trust fund logo or attribution language on project print and electronic media, publications, signage, and other communications per the ENRTF Acknowledgement Guidelines.

**First Update:** May 1, 2021

**Second Update:** November 1, 2021

**Third Update:** May 1, 2022

**Fourth Update:** November 1, 2022

**Fifth Update:** May 1, 2023

## V. ADDITIONAL BUDGET INFORMATION:

### A. Personnel and Capital Expenditures:

**Explanation of Capital Expenditures Greater Than \$5,000:** None is expected.

**Explanation of Use of Classified Staff:** NA, no classified staff is to be funded by the grant.

### Total Number of Full-time Equivalents (FTE) Directly Funded with this ENRTF Appropriation:

Enter Total Estimated Personnel Hours for entire duration of project: 0	Divide total personnel hours by 2,080 hours in 1 yr. = TOTAL FTE: 0
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### Total Number of Full-time Equivalents (FTE) Estimated to Be Funded through Contracts with this ENRTF Appropriation:

Enter Total Estimated Contract Personnel Hours for entire duration of project: 0	Divide total contract hours by 2,080 hours in 1 yr. = TOTAL FTE: 0
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## VI. PROJECT PARTNERS:

- A. Partners outside of project manager's organization receiving ENRTF funding.  
None. .
- B. Partners outside of project manager's organization NOT receiving ENRTF funding  
Project partners include the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources; Chippewa and Superior National Forests; and various Minnesota counties that choose to be involved with this grant. Partner participation will include in-kind assistance through staff efforts, existing trailhead and trail footprints, design assistance, site certification of accomplished work, etc. These partners also provide benefit through the enhancement/improvement of land assets (hunter walking trails) and habitats they administer

## VII. LONG-TERM- IMPLEMENTATION AND FUNDING:

Results from this effort will serve to greatly update and revitalize the current statewide HWT system that exists on Minnesota public forestlands, hopefully also serve as a catalyst that forms long-term solutions for the management and funding of this system by MNDNR Wildlife and public forest land administrators.

## VIII. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS:

- Project status update reports will be submitted May 1 and November 1 each year of the project.
- A final report and associated products will be submitted between June 30 and August 15, 2023.

## IX. SEE ADDITIONAL WORK PLAN COMPONENTS:

- A. Budget Spreadsheet: see attached
- B. Visual Component or Map: see attached
- C. Parcel List Spreadsheet NA
- D. Acquisition, Easements, and Restoration Requirements NA
- E. Research Addendum NA

**Attachment A: Project Budget Spreadsheet**  
**Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund**  
**M.L. 2020 Budget Spreadsheet**

**Legal Citation:**

**Project Manager:** Gary Drots/Gone Wild Enterprises, LLC

**Project Title:** Minnesota Hunter Walking Trails - Public Land Recreational Access

**Organization:** Ruffed Grouse Society

**Project Budget:** \$300,000

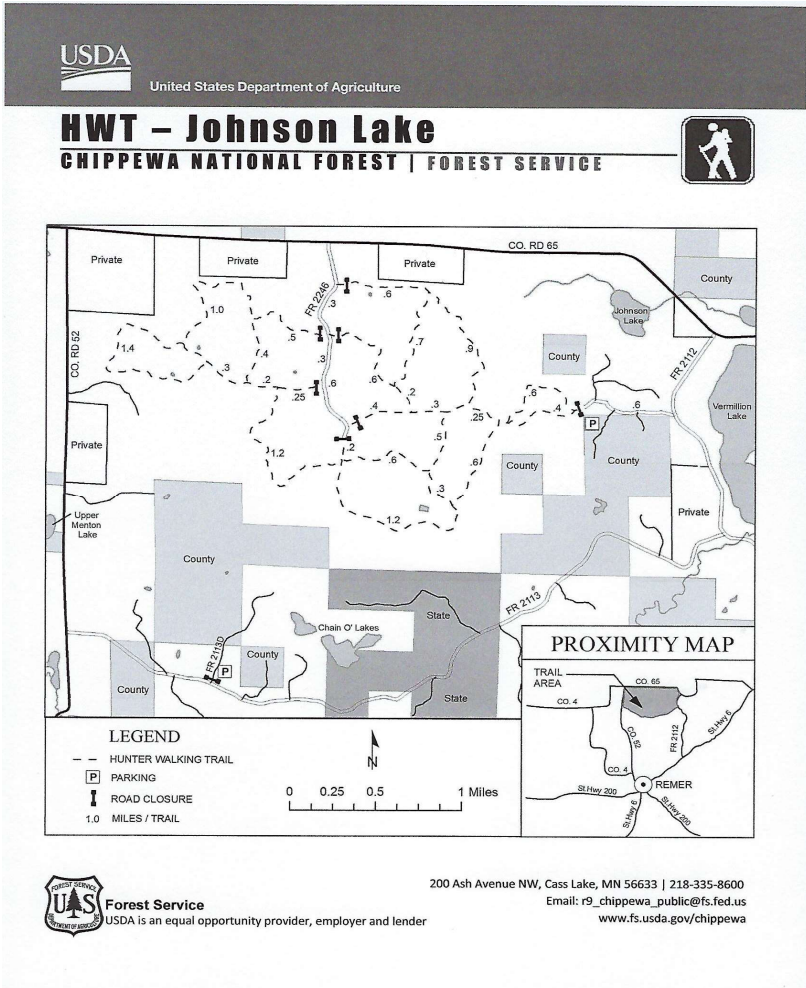
**Project Length and Completion Date:** June 30th, 2023

**Today's Date:** December 2, 2019



ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES TRUST FUND BUDGET		Budget	Amount Spent	Balance
<b>BUDGET ITEM</b>				
<b>Personnel (Wages and Benefits)</b>				
		\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
<b>Professional/Technical/Service Contracts</b>				
1) a project/grant manager will be contracted by the grant sponsor (Ruffed Grouse Society) to implement, administer, and see to successful completion of this grant.		\$ 24,000	\$ -	\$ 24,000
2) based on priorities identified in the 2019 Assessment of Minnesota Hunter Walking Trails, service contracts for infrastructure work will be secured/contracted by the grants Project Manager as per respective contracting, environmental, and permitting standards of the controlling land administrator the trail exists on as well as per contracting requirements of ENRTF funding. Majority of contracts are expected to be in the \$2,000-10,000 range, very few over \$10,000. In most cases supplies (i.e. culverts, gravel, etc.) will be speced out and included in contract needs. However gate and sign needs may have to be purchased as supplies, based on design specifications of the respective controlling land administrator.		\$ 200,000	\$ -	\$ 200,000
3) Update GIS management information relating to MNDNR's Hunter Walking Trails and Ruffed Grouse Management Areas webpages, also various County and U.S. Forest Service GIS/web information; update and create maps and related public use support needs. It is expected that some of this need will be covered as in-kind, but there will be a need for some level of contracted effort for GIS as well as mapping needs.		\$ 20,000	\$ -	\$ 20,000
<b>Equipment/Tools/Supplies</b>				
Tools, equipment, and supplies to support site work; including gates, signs, gravel and less than \$5,000 in hand/small power tools (wrenches, brushsaw, chainsaw, etc.) for Project Manager's site work needs.		\$ 50,000	\$ -	\$ 50,000
<b>Capital Expenditures Over \$5,000</b>				
		\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
<b>Fee Title Acquisition</b>				
NA		\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
<b>Easement Acquisition</b>				
NA		\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
<b>Professional Services for Acquisition</b>				
NA		\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
<b>Printing</b>				
		\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
<b>Travel expenses in Minnesota</b>				
In state expenses (primarily mileage to visit work sites or land administrator field offices) for Project Manager as per Commissioner's plan.		\$ 6,000	\$ -	\$ 6,000
<b>Other</b>				
		\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
<b>COLUMN TOTAL</b>		\$ 300,000	\$ -	\$ 300,000
<b>SOURCE AND USE OF OTHER FUNDS CONTRIBUTED TO THE PROJECT</b>				
	<b>Status (secured or pending)</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Spent</b>	<b>Balance</b>
<b>Non-State:</b>		\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
<b>State:</b>		\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
In kind: 1) \$10,000 RGS commitment as grant sponsor through staff support to facilitate the grant, funding of a Minnesota Hunter Walking Trail Assessment, 2) \$15,000 in public land adminstrator support (i.e. MNDNR, County and National Forest staff).	RGS is secured, others are pending	\$ 25,000	\$ -	\$ 25,000
<b>Other ENRTF APPROPRIATIONS AWARDED IN THE LAST SIX YEARS</b>				
	<b>Amount legally obligated but not yet spent</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Spent</b>	<b>Balance</b>
		\$ -	\$ -	\$ -

HWT map and example of possible HWT data to be collected, used to drive grant priority setting.



- County: Cass
- Land administrator: Federal
- Mgmt. Unit: Chippewa NF
- MU name: Johnson Lake HWT
- # of trails: 3
- # of miles: 14.0
- # of acres: size of trail influence area
- Mgmt. priority: H, M, L based on land administrator input
- Current maintenance: text on when, how often the HWT has been maintained (i.e. trails mowed every 2 years, trail heads checked each fall, no infrastructure work for 20+ years)
- Assessment info.: current condition, use (heavy), what infrastructure and habitat needs are there, ???
- Management needs: Note infrastructure and habitat management needs for the future (i.e. replace two gates, gravel one parking lot, three new entrance signs, etc.)
- Other: ???

