

Final Abstract

Final Report Approved on January 20, 2026

M.L. 2023 Project Abstract

For the Period Ending June 30, 2026

Project Title: Renewing Access to an Iconic North Shore Vista

Project Manager: Lisa Luokkala

Affiliation: Superior Hiking Trail Association

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City/State/Zip: Two Harbors, MN 55616

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Website: <https://superiorhiking.org/>

Funding Source:

Fiscal Year:

Legal Citation: M.L. 2023, Chp. 60, Art. 2, Sec. 2, Subd. 08m

Appropriation Amount: \$197,000

Amount Spent: \$197,000

Amount Remaining: -

Sound bite of Project Outcomes and Results

Thanks to ENRTF's support we rebuilt and reinforced the popular 6.5-mile Bean and Bear Lakes Loop, using modern sustainable trail building practices that armored the Trail and better protects the adjacent land and water. This resiliently designed trail segment will serve tens of thousands of Minnesotans each year.

Overall Project Outcome and Results

The 6.5-mile Bean and Bear Lakes Loop was identified in a 2017 SHTA Trail Assessment as one of the "Big Bad Five" due to serious erosion, tread issues, and alignment challenges. It is one of the most popular sections of trail, with over 17,000 user visits each trail season (May through October). It was completed over two construction seasons thanks to volunteers, Conservation Corps of MN and IA (CCMI), Trail Source LLC, and Great Lakes Trail Builders.

The project scope included:

- Volunteers completed two reroutes totalling 650" that moved the Trail onto higher terrain and features gentler grades, smoother tread, and impressive rock work.
- Over 480' boardwalk was installed on the Bean and Bear Lakes Loop.

- 17,000 linear of feet of trail was renewed with drainage improvements.
- New contractor built 3/4-mile reroute of the spur trail, bypassing numerous steep sections and low muddy spots.
- Expanded bench (or width) of new and existing tread from 18" to 24" in key location to accomodate two-way traffic.
- Additional trail features such as steps, checks, retaining walls, and tread hardening which will increase long-term Trail sustainability and resiliency.
- New structures based on modern trail designs (e.g. puncheon and stone steps) that replaced old infrastructure.
- Overhaul of Bear Lake Campsite with six formalized tent pads, realignment of over 500' of access spur trail, installation of approximately 20 stone steps placed in the steepest location, and improvement of the existing fire pit area.

We plan to host a ribbon cutting event in early summer 2026 to celebrate the completion of the project and are awaiting some additional improved signage/wayfinding from the Tettegouche State Park.

Project Results Use and Dissemination

SHTA highlighted the Bean and Bear Lakes Loops in four issues of our Ridgeline print publication, and mutliple Trail Mix E-Newsletter updates, dozens of social media posts, and physically installed ENRTF sign at the most popular Trailhead along the entire Superior Hiking Trail. Documentation of these articles are uploaded for your review, along with a photo of the sign installation. SHTA is planning to host an official ribbon cutting event in summer 2026. We will send out an invite to LCCMR staff and Commissioners when a date is confirmed.



Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund

M.L. 2023 Approved Final Report

General Information

Date: January 30, 2026

ID Number: 2023-181

Staff Lead: Mike Campana

Project Title: Renewing Access to an Iconic North Shore Vista

Project Budget: \$197,000

Project Manager Information

Name: Lisa Luokkala

Organization: Superior Hiking Trail Association

Office Telephone: (218) 834-2700

Email: lluokkala@superiorhiking.org

Web Address: <https://superiorhiking.org/>

Project Reporting

Final Report Approved: January 20, 2026

Reporting Status: Project Completed

Date of Last Action: January 20, 2026

Project Completion: November 30, 2025

Legal Information

Legal Citation: M.L. 2023, Chp. 60, Art. 2, Sec. 2, Subd. 08m

Appropriation Language: \$197,000 the first year is from the trust fund to the commissioner of natural resources for an agreement with the Superior Hiking Trail Association to use national trail design best practices to renew trails and a campground along the Bean and Bear Lakes section of the Superior Hiking Trail that provides access to one of Minnesota's most iconic vistas.

Appropriation End Date: June 30, 2026

Narrative

Project Summary: We seek to renew access to one of Minnesota's most iconic vistas, the Bean and Bear Lakes section of the Superior Hiking Trail, using national trail design best practices.

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

The Superior Hiking Trail is showing its age. Now 36 years old, many sections of the Trail are in need of renewal, particularly those areas on the Trail that experience heavy visitor use and have end-of-lifespan infrastructure. One of these locations is Bean and Bear Lakes. This section of Trail can easily be claimed as one of the most photographed locations along the North Shore. It has earned its popularity because of its relatively easy access, panoramic views and natural beauty.

The construction of the Superior Hiking Trail were some of the very first projects funded by LCCMR over thirty years ago. These funds played an instrumental role in providing 300 miles of recreational access to the rocky ridgeline along Lake Superior. Now, more than ever, the Trail needs assistance from LCCMR to renew and enhance the trail corridor to assure that it provides another generation of Minnesotan's a high quality outdoor recreation experience. Unlike much recreational infrastructure in the state, the Trail is managed and maintained by a non-profit and works with over 200 landowners to provide access. Because of this we are very limited to what types of funding are available on a state and federal level.

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.

We will renew, rebuild and reinforce this section of Trail that sees high visitor use and user impacts. Our staff, lead volunteers and professional trail building contractors will employ modern sustainable trail building practices that will armour the Trail and protect the adjacent land and water. Bean and Bear was identified as a problematic area along the Trail corridor during the 2019 assessments conducted in part by a ENRTF funded evaluation. Known as one of the "Big Bad Five," Bean and Bear is noted to have some of the most significant erosion issues on the Trail.

The trail renewal techniques used on this particular section of Trail will utilize primarily natural materials found on site to design a more resilient Trail. The use of stone steps and modern trail water management techniques will help this section of the Trail withstand adverse weather events and increased visitor use. Once complete, the Trail will properly shed water and reduce erosion on both the Trail itself and the adjacent land.

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?

Through our Trail Renewal Program, the Superior Hiking Trail Association assures that every mile of the footpath along the North Shore is built sustainably to be enjoyed by tens of thousands of annual visitors for decades to come -- all without causing unnecessary harm to surrounding lands and waters. Our efforts to make the SHT resilient to climate changes and increase visitor use will help protect and preserve the sensitive habitats and ecosystems through which the Trail traverses.

The Trail is a space for exploration and education -- it's where thousands of Minnesotans start their lifelong connection to the outdoors.

Project Location

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

County(s): Lake

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

Statewide

When will the work impact occur?

During the Project and In the Future

Activities and Milestones

Activity 1: Increase the resiliency of the Bean and Bear Trail section through stone work.

Activity Budget: \$103,000

Activity Description:

By utilizing nature's own most sustainable building materials, SHTA plans to armour the Trail using stone that can be sourced hyper-locally along the trail corridor. This stone is the most resilient and long-lasting material available to Northeastern Minnesotan trail builders and this section of the Trail has plenty of it to spare. Deeply graded sections of the Bean and Bear section will be retrofitted with stone steps and lower muddier sections of the Trail section will be retrofitted with stone step stones which will allow trail users to traverse through perennial mudholes with ease while also reducing impacts to adjacent land.

Activity Milestones:

Description	Approximate Completion Date
Contractor secured for 2024 work	December 31, 2023
Contractor secured for 2025 work	December 31, 2024
75 to 125 stone steps installed along the Bean and Bear trail section	September 30, 2025
10 to 20 step stones installed along Bean and Bear trail section	October 31, 2025

Activity 2: Renew tread, install drainage management systems and reroute a small section of the Bean and Bear trail section

Activity Budget: \$91,000

Activity Description:

Due to poor location of the original trail alignment, age of trail infrastructure and erosion due to storm events and heavy visitor use there are portions of the Bean and Bear trail section that require tread repair, drainage work, puncheon (boardwalk) replacement and even a short reroute to avert a particularly challenging areas of the original alignment. These measures will help repair the existing footpath and allow water to stay off the trail. By keeping water off, we keep people on the Trail and reduce impacts to the adjacent land when people try to find alternative routes around a particularly soggy section of trail.

Activity Milestones:

Description	Approximate Completion Date
Installation of between 750 to 850 feet of puncheon	November 30, 2025
Renew/repair and provide proper drainage for 2,500 to 3,500 ft of tread	November 30, 2025
Reroute 1,000 ft. of trail to more sustainably located alignment(s)	November 30, 2025

Activity 3: Campsite renewal

Activity Budget: \$3,000

Activity Description:

The campsite located along this trail section sees heavy use and a lot of wear and tear. Just like any other piece of trail infrastructure, campsites require not only annual maintenance but also more intensive repair and renewal over time. The goal will be to reset the tent pads within the campsite to more clearly delineate the campsite boundary.

Activity Milestones:

Description	Approximate Completion Date
Rehab plan is finalized and permissions in place with land manager	October 31, 2024
One campsite will be repaired and renewed	November 30, 2025

Project Partners and Collaborators

Name	Organization	Role	Receiving Funds
Christa Maxwell	Minnesota DNR Parks and Trails Division	Liaison to SHTA from DNR to assist in planning and executing trail projects within North Shore state parks	No
Nate Eide	Lake County	Liaison to SHTA from Lake County to assist in planning and executing trail projects within Lake County managed public lands	No
Matt Davis	North Country Trail Association	Provides advice, counsel, technical assistance	No
Lana Fralich	City of Silver Bay	Liaison to the City of Silver Bay regarding communications and coordination for site access and staging materials	No

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. Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund 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 ENTRF Acknowledgment Guidelines. Specifically, ENRTF will be acknowledged through the following communication platforms: (1) SHTA's monthly e-newsletter that is sent out to 11,000 individuals. There is no cost to receive this newsletter and majority of those who sign up are supports and users of the Trail. We recognize funders and provide project updates through this publication. (2) SHTA's twice monthly Ridgeline publication that is sent out to 3,000 households. This publication is for members of the Association and we recognize our grant funders and highlight project in each publication. (3) Press releases, social media and earn media around the project. Upon completion of the project we will engage the media through a press release and/or a media event to share the story of this project and its funding partners.

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?

Advancements in sustainable trail building techniques will allow SHTA to reset the lifespan of the Trail and prepare for a more resilient future.

SHTA continues to diversify its funding streams and strengthen relationships with land managers to guarantee a high-quality recreational experience now and into the future. SHTA's 2020-2023 Strategic Plan clearly outlines a road map to secure the trail corridor for future generations of users, address emerging needs around visitor use management all while assuring adequate resources are in place to support the longevity of the Trail corridor and support people to safely and respectfully use Minnesota's public lands.

Other ENRTF Appropriations Awarded in the Last Six Years

Name	Appropriation	Amount Awarded
Enhancement Plan for Superior Hiking Trail	M.L. 2018, Chp. 214, Art. 4, Sec. 2, Subd. 09f	\$100,000
Restoring Five Sections of the Superior Hiking Trail	M.L. 2019, First Special Session, Chp. 4, Art. 2, Sec. 2, Subd. 09o	\$191,000

Plumbing The Muddy Depths Of Superior Hiking Trail	M.L. 2021, First Special Session, Chp. 6, Art. 6, Sec. 2, Subd. 08h	\$187,000
Superior Hiking Trail As Environmental Showcase	M.L. 2021, First Special Session, Chp. 6, Art. 5, Sec. 2, Subd. 09k	\$450,000

Budget Summary

Category / Name	Subcategory or Type	Description	Purpose	Gen. Ineligible	% Benefits	# FTE	Classified Staff?	\$ Amount	\$ Amount Spent	\$ Amount Remaining
Personnel										
Trail Operations Director		Project Manager/Oversee the selection and management of contractors and volunteers			15%	0.15		\$10,150	-	-
							Sub Total	\$10,150	\$10,150	-
Contracts and Services										
Trail Source	Service Contract	Professional trail building and stone work				3		\$186,100	\$186,100	-
							Sub Total	\$186,100	\$186,100	-
Equipment, Tools, and Supplies										
	Tools and Supplies	Lumber and building supplies	Construction of puncheon (boardwalk)					-	-	-
							Sub Total	-	-	-
Capital Expenditures										
							Sub Total	-	-	-
Acquisitions and Stewardship										
							Sub Total	-	-	-
Travel In Minnesota										
	Miles/ Meals/ Lodging	Up to 10 visits to the site (planning through post-construction)	Mileage and meals for Trail Operations Director for site visits over the course of the project					\$750	\$750	-
							Sub Total	\$750	\$750	-

Travel Outside Minnesota										
							Sub Total	-	-	-
Printing and Publication										
							Sub Total	-	-	-
Other Expenses							Sub Total	-	-	-
							Grand Total	\$197,000	\$197,000	-

Classified Staff or Generally Ineligible Expenses

Category/Name	Subcategory or Type	Description	Justification Ineligible Expense or Classified Staff Request
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Non ENRTF Funds

Category	Specific Source	Use	Status	\$ Amount	\$ Amount Spent	\$ Amount Remaining
State						
			State Sub Total	-	-	-
Non-State						
Cash	SHTA Donations	Additional staff time for project management	Secured	\$5,000	\$5,000	-
In-Kind	SHTA Volunteer Hours	Project labor valued at \$20/hour	Secured	\$4,000	\$4,000	-
Cash	SHTA Cash Reserves	Contractor Costs	Secured	\$62,640	\$62,640	-
			Non State Sub Total	\$71,640	\$71,640	-
			Funds Total	\$71,640	\$71,640	-

Attachments

Required Attachments

Visual Component

File: [3096f00d-cbf.pdf](#)

Alternate Text for Visual Component

Map showing location of Bean and Bear trail improvements...

Financial Capacity

File: [bf4310c7-ba5.pdf](#)

Board Resolution or Letter

Title	File
SHTA Board Resolution - May 2022	Ofbbfbfea-0e5.pdf

Supplemental Attachments

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

Title	File
City of Silver Bay Letter of Support	9e454e26-bf9.pdf
DNR District Supervisor Letter of Support	e60d1cb4-6fc.pdf
Background Check Certification Form	1d1a87bf-723.pdf
2024 Bean & Bear Loop Closure Map	e5e3d4f6-f89.pdf
Bean & Bear Loop Closure Press Release	42cb8d28-bf4.pdf
WDIO News Trail Closures April 15, 2024	7f5ef6f8-f22.pdf
Minnesota Public Radio News Trail Closures, April 15, 2024	2f2fecfc-84d.pdf
Bean & Bear Loop Stone Steps	d1f351ed-ac3.jpe
Bean & Bear Loop Stone stair with rock amoring	db2c02c5-b1f.jpe
Bean & Bear Loop Puncheon Installation	63cf10c5-c83.jpe
Photo of Bear Lake Campsite Renewal	30318804-223.jpe
All-Femme Work Project working on the 650' reroute on Bean and Bear Loop	5694df5c-b90.jpe
Conservation Corps of MN and Iowa working on Bean and Bear Loop reroute	fe54777f-6fd.jpe
Trail Ops Director, Tamer Ibrahim and Rocksteady Running owner John Storkamp working on a boarwalk replacement project on Bean and Bear Loop	dcfd4b71-912.jpe
Boardwalk replacement project on Bean and Bear Loop, completed with volunteers from the Rocksteady Running community of trail runners.	bb9700c2-930.jpe
CCMI Crew at Bean and Bear 650' reroute, building new stone staircase	0d10ddac-91c.jpe
Before and After Photos of Stone Staircase on Bean and Bear Reroute	67d7378e-174.jpe
Bear Lake Campsite Tent Pad	8c986cdd-c03.jpe
Boardwalk Project Installation along Bean & Bear Loop	bc45eca4-31d.jpe
Moving stones at Bean and Bear Loop: All-Femme Work group	f9a03d3e-5ab.jpe
Bean & Bear Lakes Loop Map of Final Improvements	560a31e5-7d8.pdf
Penn Blvd Trailhead ENRTF Signage Photo	8eeede79-773.jpe
Bean and Bear Lake Trail Assessment and Recommended Improvements (Original Visual Component)	fb623c65-9db.pdf

Media Links

Title	Link
Trail Mix Newsletter (November 2023)	https://mailchi.mp/superiorhiking.org/nov2023trails
Bean and Bear Re-Opening Facebook Social Media Post	https://www.facebook.com/share/p/FDi4R8r3D22p7uvR/
Bean & Bear Re-Opening Instagram Media Post	https://www.instagram.com/p/C_iwXvlsV4j/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link&igsh=MzRlODBiNWFIZA==
2024 Spring Ridgeline	https://superiorhiking.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/SHTA-003-Ridgeline-5-2024_HiRes.pdf
2024 Fall Ridgeline	https://superiorhiking.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/SHTA-Ridgeline_Fall-2024.pdf
2024 Trail Work Year In Review	https://superiorhiking.org/2024-trail-work-year-in-review/
2025 Spring Ridgeline	https://superiorhiking.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/04/SHTA-2025-Spring-Ridgeline.pdf
Spring 2025 Ridgeline	https://superiorhiking.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/04/SHTA-2025-Spring-Ridgeline.pdf
Star Tribune Article: "More and more and more" leaf-peepers stress state parks along North Shore	https://www.startribune.com/up-the-north-shore-crowds-get-as-intense-as-fall-colors/601476090
Video: Stone Masonry on the Superior Hiking Trail with CCMi MN and Iowa	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DalsSmolpH4
Fall 2025 Ridgeline Publication	https://superiorhiking.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/11/Ridgeline-Fall-2025-SHTA.pdf

Difference between Proposal and Work Plan

Describe changes from Proposal to Work Plan Stage

STHA staff have adjusted the quantities in the Milestone deliverables to reflect a range, for instance "10 to 20 stone steps" instead of definitive "18." This range allows volunteers and contractors to adapt their plans based on construction site conditions. The nature of trail work requires a level of flexibility. This is the case for Milestones 1 and 2 under Activity 1, and Milestone 1,2, and 3 under Activity 2.

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 understand that travel expenses are only approved if they follow the "Commissioner's Plan" promulgated by the Commissioner of Management of Budget or, for University of Minnesota projects, the University of Minnesota plan?

Yes, I understand the Commissioner's Plan applies.

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

Do you understand that a named service contract does not constitute a funder-designated subrecipient or approval of a sole-source contract? In other words, a service contract entity is only approved if it has been selected according to the contracting rules identified in state law and policy for organizations that receive ENRTF funds through direct appropriations, or in the DNR's reimbursement manual for non-state organizations. These rules may include competitive bidding and prevailing wage requirements

Yes, I understand

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	Amendment Request	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget - Professional / Technical Contracts • Budget - Non-ENRTF Funds Contributed 	The amendment reflects the name of the chosen contractor, Trail Source, for the scope of the grant funds. Contractor costs increased to \$225,000 in total. The shortfall of \$62,640 will be covered by SHTA cash reserves as outlined in the updated grant budget page.	May 31, 2024	Yes	June 11, 2024
2	Amendment Request	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget - Professional / Technical Contracts • Budget - Capital, Equipment, Tools, and Supplies 	Request to move the remaining \$9,090 in materials line item expense over to Professional/Technical Contracts. SHTA ended up including materials in the scope of the contract with the contractor, so a separate line item is no longer needed but is reflected in the contractor agreement.	November 7, 2024	Yes	November 13, 2024
3	Amendment Request	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget - Professional / Technical Contracts • Budget - Capital, Equipment, Tools, and Supplies 	We have \$14,650 remaining/budgeted in materials. Our original budget assumed we would be purchasing the materials yet this all ended up being covered within our project contractor scope of work. We would like to move these funds over to our Contractor line.	September 9, 2025	Yes	September 10, 2025

Status Update Reporting

Final Status Update January 14, 2026

Date Submitted: December 18, 2025

Date Approved: December 19, 2025

Overall Update

SHT's Bean and Bear Lakes Loop was fully renewed, rebuilt and reinforced thanks to the support of ENRTF. With some of the highest visitor use on our 300-mile trail corridor, our staff, lead volunteers and professional trail building contractors used modern sustainable trail building practices that armored the Trail and now protects the adjacent land and water. Known as one of the "Big Bad Five," Bean and Bear was noted back in 2019 to have some of the most significant erosion issues on the Trail.

Today, we can proudly say that this 6.5-mile section is properly shedding water and designed in a way to reduce erosion. The final project was completed in late October by a group of volunteers, referred to as a "local response team," who came in to complete the 300-foot reroute. This final hour push by passionate volunteers reflects of the attitude towards this entire project -- one of commitment and love of the Superior Hiking Trail.

The project included the complete renewal of the Main Trail, including heavy use of rock stone steps and staircases, along with improved water management devices, new boardwalk, over one mile of reroutes, and a renewed Campsite.

Activity 1

This activity was previously marked complete.

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

Activity 2

Renew tread, install drainage management systems and reroute a small section of the Bean and Bear trail section.

Milestone 1: 480 feet of boardwalk was installed. SHTA will not meet this Milestone because we were able to reduce boardwalk infrastructure on this project by increasing our stone work to build resilient trail and also identifying reroutes that kept the trail corridor out of water and low areas. This is a win-win for the SHTA and for ENTRF -- boardwalk is a more costly and requires more long-term maintenance. We arrived at the same outcome -- a more resilient trail but without additional cost or ongoing maintenance, which is a benefit to everyone.

Milestone 2: COMPLETED 17,000 linear feet of trail renewed with drainage improvements.

Milestone 3: 4,910 linear feet of reroute COMPLETED -- 3,960' by contractors and 950' by volunteers.

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

Activity 3

This activity was previously marked complete.

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

Dissemination

SHTA continues to use our media platforms to share the stories of ENRTF/LCCMR supported projects along our trail corridor. This project was highlighted in our Spring 2025 Ridgeline and our Fall 2025 Ridgeline publications, that go out to approximately 5,000 households and is also available online. SHTA experienced earned media around this project including a featured video about the Conservation Corps of MN and Iowa and mentions in a Fall 2025 Star Tribune Article. A ENRTF sign has been installed at Penn Blvd Trailhead (photo under attachment). This is the single most popular trailhead along the entire SHT corridor.

Status Update Reporting

Status Update October 1, 2025

Date Submitted: December 18, 2025

Date Approved: December 19, 2025

Overall Update

Bean and Bear Loop was humming with activity during the 2025 construction season. At one point this summer, we had three active projects on that location on the same weekend! With all permits in place, contractors moved quickly in the early part of the summer with the extensive 3,960' reroute that moved the trail to a higher and drier location. In addition the campsite redesign was complete with contractor Great Lakes Trail Builders leading a Conservation Corps of MN and Iowa (CCMI) crew. This same crew would return to the Loop in the fall to work for two more weeks with on smaller reroutes still needed as part of the larger Bean and Bear Renewal project.

An additional 840 hours of volunteer hours were provided through three separate work parties -- a boardwalk project collaboratively hosted by Rocksteady Running Co., an all-femme work weekend, a traditional 5-day work party. That is a value of over \$16,000, far exceeding our initial \$4,000 estimate of volunteer labor contributions.

The last work remaining is the completion of a short 300' reroute on the back side of the Loop and the finishing touches on the signage and blazing.

Activity 1

This activity was previously marked complete.

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

Activity 2

Renew tread, install drainage management systems and reroute a small section of the Bean and Bear trail section.

Milestone 1: 480 feet of boardwalk was installed. SHTA will not meet this Milestone because we were able to reduce boardwalk infrastructure on this project by increasing our stone work to build resilient trail and also identifying reroutes that kept the trail corridor out of water and low areas. This is a win-win for the SHTA and for ENTRF -- boardwalk is a more costly and requires more long-term maintenance. WE arrived at the same outcome -- a more resilient trail but without additional cost or ongoing maintenance, which is a benefit to everyone.

Milestone 2: **COMPLETED** 17,000 linear feet of trail renewed with drainage improvements.

Milestone 3: 4,610 linear feet of reroute **COMPLETED** -- 3,960' by contractors and 650' by volunteers. A remaining approx. 300' reroute still remains to be completed this fall by volunteers.

Activity 3

COMPLETE! A new 530' access trail to the Bear Lake campsite was constructed to accommodate new satellite tent pads branch off along its length. It begins at the bottom of the hill, and heads back uphill for a short distance then follows the hillside above the lake. Once it reaches the campsite, it climbs, crosses the existing latrine trail and continues. The existing trail from the new trail to the campsites was also improved. A portion of the existing latrine trail below the access trail was rehabbed. 6 new tent pads were constructed. The tent pad locations are all on the hillside to discourage sprawl. The tent pad design includes a small retaining wall built on the downhill side and filled to provide a level (with a slight downhill pitch) pad, approximately 10'x10'. The existing common space was also rehabbed. Work was completed by contractor Great Lakes Trail Builders alongside the Conservation Corps of Minnesota and Iowa.

The poor conditions of the old campsite had also caused a problem rogue campsite to develop at the top of the hill. This

was also decommissioned as part of the larger Bear Lake Campsite Renewal efforts.

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

Dissemination

SHTA continues to use our media platforms to share the stories of ENRTF/LCCMR supported projects along our trail corridor. This project was highlighted in our Spring 2025 Ridgeline and our Fall 2025 Ridgeline publications, that go out to approximately 5,000 households and is also available online.

Status Update Reporting

Status Update April 1, 2025

Date Submitted: May 6, 2025

Date Approved: May 7, 2025

Overall Update

SHTA has made great progress in 2024 in using trail renewal techniques on the Bean & Bear loop section of Trail that utilize primarily natural materials found on site to design a more resilient Trail. Project contractor, Trail Source, masterfully used natural materials to build structures and reinforce the tread on this heavily used section. They constructed stone steps, improved drainage to prevent mud, installed checks, retaining walls, and hardened the tread. Trail Source replaced old structures with new puncheon based on modern trail building designs.

The second phase, to commence in summer of 2025, will include two small reroutes on the main trail and an additional reroute on the spur side of the loop. Work will be completed by a mix of volunteers and Trail Source, our contractor. It will also include renewal of the Bear Lake campsite to a more sustainable design to balance increased use and protecting the adjacent land.

Note: There was an error in the previous budget report that is now updated. There was an initial misinterpretation of where an expense should be billed. Initially, \$14,650 was billed to Supplies, but materials were under the existing contract with the trail contractor, not a SHTA expense.

Activity 1

This activity was previously marked complete.

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

Activity 2

Renew tread, install drainage management systems and reroute a small section of the Bean and Bear trail section.

Milestone 1 has been partially met in 2024, 250 feet of puncheon was installed by Trail Source. An addition 120 feet of boardwalk will be installed by volunteers from the trail running community in the summer of 2025.

Milestone 2 has been met, with 17,000 linear of feet of trail renewed with drainage improvements.

Milestone 3 is has received DNR approval to proceed with the reroutes, their permitting processes were backlogged this summer so construction will proceed in summer 2025. Two smaller reroutes will be completed by volunteer-led projects and the third and largest reroute will be contracted by Trail Source, our project contractor.

Activity 3

Great Lakes Trail Builders will complete the project in summer of 2025 with the assistance of a Conservation Corps crew.

SHTA has approved permission from the DNR to proceed.

Milestone #2 is complete.

Dissemination

Since our last report, Superior Hiking Trail Association recognized ENRTF in our social media posts (Facebook and Instagram) along with thanking this funding source and providing a project update in our Fall 2024 Ridgeline publication. Additional recognition was given at our three volunteer celebrations and 2025 Volunteer Opportunities Webinar. While not published yet, additional recognition will be provided in our 2025 Spring Ridgeline publication.

Status Update Reporting

Status Update October 1, 2024

Date Submitted: November 7, 2024

Date Approved: November 13, 2024

Overall Update

The Bean and Bear Renewal project has received more attention from the public and press than any other SHTA project of recent time, reaffirming the known fact that this is one of the most beloved iconic locations on the SHT. SHTA hired a contractor, Trail Source to complete the majority of the trail renewal work on the main trail, and we are still awaiting DNR permission to proceed with the reroutes of the backside of the loop. Work will continue in 2025, including three reroutes, additional puncheon replacement and rehabilitation of the Bear Lake campsite.

Activity 1

Stone work was installed to build the resiliency of the trail alignment to withstand heavy visitor use and erosion. SHTA hired a contractor, Trail Source, to complete the slate of work. Over 100 stone steps were installed as part of the overall work, along with 10 stone steps.

While initially thought that Activity 1 may take two seasons and wrap up in 2025, the contractor was able to devote more time to these project elements as they awaited DNR approvals for Activity 2 Milestone 3, approvals for reroutes. Reroutes will be conducted in 2025.

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

Activity 2

Milestone 1 has been partially met in 2024, 250 feet of puncheon was installed by Trail Source.

Milestone 2 has been met, with 17,000 linear feet of trail renewed with drainage improvements.

Milestone 3 is still awaiting DNR approval to proceed with the reroutes, their permitting processes were backlogged this summer. Construction will proceed in 2025, once approved.

Activity 3

SHTA has bid out the project in 2024 and identified a contractor for the campsite renewal. Great Lakes Trail Builders will complete the project in 2025. In the summer of 2024 we were able to secure the permissions from the DNR to proceed with the rehabilitation project after they completed their environmental and cultural reviews. Cash donations from SHTA members will be used to pay for this portion of the project.

Milestone #2 is complete.

Dissemination

The Superior Hiking Trail Association provided a lot of communication to general public and the trail community in the last year regarding the Bean & Bear Renewal projects. We partnered with the MN DNR Parks & Trails to identify a communication plan around the initial trail closure. From our press release we also received a lot of earned media from outlets like MPR, Star Tribune, WDIO news and Northland News. We recognized ENRTF in our social media posts (Facebook and Instagram) along with thanking this funding source in our Spring 2024 Ridgeline publication.

Status Update Reporting

Status Update April 1, 2024

Date Submitted: May 31, 2024

Date Approved: June 11, 2024

Overall Update

SHTA has been working closely with the DNR Parks & Trails to obtain the permissions to proceed with the project. The majority of the projects falls under our existing trail corridor and associated lease agreement with the DNR. The sections we are proposing reroutes do require a environmental and cultural review and are currently slated to take place in spring 2024. The campsite renewal is also awaiting environmental and cultural review. These are anticipated to be completed by mid-summer. Two smaller reroutes along the loop will be completed by volunteers.

Due to the popularity of this section of the Superior Hiking Trail, SHTA is coordinating with DNR on closure communications and encouraging alternative routes. We will have a full communications plan to execute together this spring as we move into the heart of the hiking season.

Contractors have been secured for both the trail renewal project and also the campsite renewal project. The bids came way over anticipated budget. SHTA had two options -- reduce the scope of the project or find additional funding. SHTA Board of Director's chose option two, we will be using our cash reserves to address the budget shortfall and complete the entirety of the envisioned renewal.

Activity 1

Milestone three and four are complete. A contractor has been identified and has entered a signed agreement with SHTA for 2024 and 2025. Tread rehab and stone work will commence in 2024.

Attached is a draft map of the proposed closure. As mentioned above, we are working with the MN DNR Communications team to get spread the word about the closures and more importantly providing education about the importance of trail rehabilitation in areas of the trail system that experience heavy use.

Activity 2

The work outlined in activity 2 will be completed primarily to a paid contractor who is under contract. We are awaiting final review of the proposed reroute, but the vast majority of the other drainage work can commence in 2024. In addition, we have two identified volunteer-led projects that will take place in 2024 and 2025 to help us complete the envisioned overall Bean & Bear Lakes Loop Renewal.

Activity 3

The contractor for the campsite renewal have been secured. The rehabilitation plan is currently under review by the Minnesota DNR and we anticipate approval by mid-summer.

Dissemination

Our awesome LCCMR site visit and overview of the ENRTF supported 2024 and 2025 trail renewal projects was highlighted in on November 2023 Trail Mix E-Newsletter. The newsletter is received by 16,000 subscribers.
<https://mailchi.mp/superiorhiking.org/nov2023trailmix>