



# Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund

M.L. 2026 Approved Work Plan

## General Information

**ID Number:** 2026-035

**Staff Lead:** Tiffany Schaufler

**Date this document submitted to LCCMR:** May 27, 2026

**Project Title:** Lake Minnewashta Regional Park Restoration

**Project Budget:** \$392,000

## Project Manager Information

**Name:** Sam Pertz

**Organization:** Carver County

**Office Telephone:** (952) 466-5253

**Email:** spertz@carvercountymn.gov

**Web Address:** <https://www.carvercountymn.gov/departments/public-works/parks-recreation>

## Project Reporting

**Date Work Plan Approved by LCCMR:** June 17, 2026

**Reporting Schedule:** April 1 / October 1 of each year.

**Project Completion:** June 30, 2029

**Final Report Due Date:** August 14, 2029

## Legal Information

**Legal Citation:** M.L. 2026, Chp. 104, Sec. 2, Subd. 08a

**Appropriation Language:** \$392,000 the second year is from the trust fund to the commissioner of natural resources for an agreement with Carver County to: (1) restore critical habitat at Lake Minnewashta Regional Park consistent with the park natural resources management plan; and (2) collect data to evaluate restoration success and guide adaptive management.

**Appropriation End Date:** June 30, 2029

## Narrative

**Project Summary:** Funds will support land restoration and invasive species mitigation, including efforts to address EAB, in alignment with recommendations from the Lake Minnewashta Regional Park Natural Resource Management Plan (May 2024)

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

The County's landscape has been heavily altered by agriculture and urban development, making its remaining natural areas vital for sustaining ecological functions. However, these preserved habitats have experienced significant degradation due to the loss of natural disturbances, the spread of invasive species, habitat fragmentation, and edge development.

LMRP is threatened by invasive species and climate change, as detailed in the attached Natural Resource Management Plan. The park's northeastern portion has been severely impacted by historical agricultural activity dating back to the 1930s, leading to a highly disturbed plant community. Over time, early successional herbaceous species, aggressive woody plants, and invasive species have spread.

The high concentration of green ash poses an urgent ecological challenge. The inevitable spread of EAB will likely kill these trees within a decade, causing canopy loss, safety hazards, and increased vulnerability to invasive species like buckthorn. This project will restore critical habitat for species such as the northern long-eared bat, tricolored bat, monarch butterfly, and rusty patched bumble bees. We envision this project as a signature restoration effort in Carver County, setting a precedent for future initiatives across the park system.

**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.**

This project addresses priorities in Lake Minnewashta Regional Park NRMP. We will map and inventory existing vegetation, identifying invasive species, high-risk ash trees, and native vegetation areas. Using this data, we will develop and implement a removal plan for trees, buckthorn and scrub brush, replacing them with native species like oaks to restore forest diversity. Native seeding and planting will further enhance biodiversity.

After planting and reseeding, a three-year maintenance program will remove any regrowth of invasive species allowing time for the establishment of newly planted trees and shrubs. We will also monitor vegetation changes, invasive species recolonization, and native plant establishment. Surveys and data collection will guide adaptive management strategies to ensure restoration success. Outreach efforts will educate the public on the importance of native habitat restoration.

This project will restore LMRP's forest to a healthier, more resilient state. Project tasks include:

- Collect site data (land survey of areas that need treatment and removal) to draft a \restoration and planting plan.
- Remove target trees and invasive vegetation to support native species.
- Controll herbaceous invasive species to maintain a healthy understory.
- Conduct native seeding and planting.
- Install native trees to reestablish Mesic Forest.
- Monitor plant establishment and adapt management strategies

**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?**

Our goal is to address immediate restoration needs on approximately 12 acers, while establishing a long-term maintenance program that serves as a model for future efforts. Aligned with LCCMR's Land Use (Restoration) priorities,

this initiative will educate the public and enhance ecological and recreational value. By implementing effective restoration practices, Carver County will contribute to statewide conservation efforts, preserving Lake Minnewashta Regional Park's natural resources for future generations. Additionally, this project will serve as a present model for parts of the county. Our goal is to also build staff capacity and awareness on how to implement natural resource management.

## Project Location

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

Region(s): Metro

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

Region(s): Metro

**When will the work impact occur?**

During the Project and In the Future

## Activities and Milestones

### Activity 1: Restoration Planning

**Activity Budget:** \$55,000

**Activity Description:**

Objective: Restore 12 acres of old-field within Lake Minnewashta Regional Park to a much higher ecological value for wildlife and public appreciation.

Funds will be used to hire a contractor to develop a comprehensive site plan (~12 acres) to guide tree and vegetation management efforts. This plan will identify necessary tree removals, including hazardous or diseased trees (~300), and outline areas for scrub and brush clearing to improve site conditions. Carver County will issue a bid for the work identified in the restoration and planting plan.

**Activity Milestones:**

Description	Approximate Completion Date
Hire a contractor to develop a plan for removals and plantings	September 30, 2026
Restoration Plan Development	November 30, 2026
Contractor solicitation and bidding for restoration work	December 31, 2026

### Activity 2: Planting & Monitoring

**Activity Budget:** \$337,000

**Activity Description:**

The contractor will be responsible for removal of trees (~300), brushing (cut and stump treatment, and forestry mowing), spot herbicide, prescribed burns, and tilling. The contractor will be responsible for selecting and installing native trees (~300) and understory plants (~400 shrubs) that enhance ecological benefits, improve habitat quality, and contribute to long-term site sustainability. Funds will be used to monitor and replace plantings over a three-year period. This assumes a 10% replacement each year. After year 3, Carver County will take over the monitoring and replacement.

**Activity Milestones:**

Description	Approximate Completion Date
Hire construction contractor for removals and plantings	February 28, 2027
Contractor performs restoration removals.	May 31, 2027
Contractor performs restoration seeding and plantings	November 30, 2027
Evaluation and monitoring after initial planting completion	May 31, 2028
Implement vegetation monitoring protocol and replacement plantings.	June 30, 2029
Evaluation three years after planting completed.	June 30, 2029
Install durable and fixed signage in prominent locations with ENRTF acknowledgment and logo.	June 30, 2029

## Project Partners and Collaborators

Name	Organization	Role	Receiving Funds
Martin Walsh	Carver County Parks and Recreation Department	Project manager overseeing this request.	Yes

## 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.**

The County will be producing and placing informational signs along the adjacent hiking/xx ski trails in the park to showcase the purpose and benefits of the project, as well as to acknowledge funding support from the Environmental and Natural Resource Trust Fund. These signs will help interpret the work and educate park visitors about the environmental improvements and the long-term value of restoration efforts.

Beyond physical signs, the County is committed to promoting the project through a variety of media channels at the county level. This includes outreach through social media platforms, newsletters, and press releases. We also plan to work closely with adjacent cities to extend these efforts and ensure consistent communication across communities. To further engage the public, we have a website that park users, governmental agencies, and stakeholders can visit about our improvement projects and are able obtain updates, provide feedback, and encourage people to learn more about the project.

The County will leverage its experience and insights gained from this project to serve as a model for similar initiatives, promoting environmental restoration and educational outreach.

## 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?**

Funding will be used to monitor and replace plantings over a three-year period. Thereafter, County staff will monitor and maintain the site. The County has also been strategically planning for short- and long-term funding needs to maintain its parks assets. To ensure ongoing implementation, the County is committed to increasing annual funding for park needs and has been securing grant dollars. This sustained commitment ensures resources are effectively allocated beyond project completion. The attached County Board resolution further reinforces leadership support, ensuring long-term success in maintaining and preserving the County's natural and recreational assets.

## Budget Summary

Category / Name	Subcategory or Type	Description	Purpose	Gen. Ineligible	% Benefits	# FTE	Classified Staff?	\$ Amount
<b>Personnel</b>								
							<b>Sub Total</b>	-
<b>Contracts and Services</b>								
Consultant/Contractor	Service Contract	A contractor will be hired for Activity #1 to develop a comprehensive plan for removals and plantings and to support the contractor bidding process for project implementation.				0		\$55,000
Contractor	Service Contract	The contractor will manage Activity #3 (tree removal, brushing, herbicide, burns, and tilling), Activity #4 (planting 300 trees and 400 shrubs with site prep and maintenance), and Activity #5 (monitoring and replacing 10% of plantings annually for three years before Carver County takes over).				0		\$337,000
							<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>\$392,000</b>
<b>Equipment, Tools, and Supplies</b>								
							<b>Sub Total</b>	-
<b>Capital Equipment</b>								
							<b>Sub Total</b>	-
<b>Acquisitions and Stewardship</b>								
							<b>Sub Total</b>	-
<b>Travel In Minnesota</b>								
							<b>Sub Total</b>	-
<b>Travel Outside Minnesota</b>								
							<b>Sub Total</b>	-

<b>Printing and Publication</b>								
							<b>Sub Total</b>	-
<b>Other Expenses</b>								
							<b>Sub Total</b>	-
							<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>\$392,000</b>

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
State				
			State Sub Total	-
Non-State				
			Non State Sub Total	-
			Funds Total	-

**Total Project Cost: \$392,000**

**This amount accurately reflects total project cost?**

Yes

## Acquisition and Restoration

### Parcel List

Name	County	Site Significance	Activity	Acres	Miles	Estimated Cost	Type of Landowner	Easement or Title Holder	Status of Work
25.0041300	Carver	Lake Minnewashta Regional Park	Restoration	12	-	\$392,000	Public	NA	Has Not Begun
SECTION 04 TOWNSHIP 116 RANGE 023 GOVT LOT 3 & SE1/4 NE1/4 EXC: PARCEL DESC AS: BEG NW CORN OF GOVT LOT 3 TH E 680' TH S 396' TH SWLY 696.19' TH N 550' TO BEG & EXC: N 396' OF LOT	Carver	Forest,	Restoration	-	-	-	Public		Has Not Begun
<b>Totals</b>				<b>12</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>\$392,000</b>			

## Restoration

### **1. Provide a statement confirming that all restoration activities completed with these funds will occur on land permanently protected by a conservation easement or public ownership.**

The land is publicly owned, operated, and maintained by Carver County.

### **2. Summarize the components and expected outcomes of restoration and management plans for the parcels to be restored by your organization, how these plans are kept on file by your organization, and overall strategies for long-term plan implementation.**

Carver County is actively combating the spread of emerald ash borer (EAB), an invasive pest threatening ash trees in the park. Regular updates are available on the County's website. As part of this project, plan documents and progress reports will also be posted online.

### **3. Describe how restoration efforts will utilize and follow the Board of Soil and Water Resources "Native Vegetation Establishment and Enhancement Guidelines" in order to ensure ecological integrity and pollinator enhancement.**

Restoration efforts at LMRP will follow the BWSR "Native Vegetation Establishment and Enhancement Guidelines" to ensure ecological integrity and pollinator enhancement through targeted invasive species removal strategies, including:

1. Assessment & Prioritization – A comprehensive site evaluation will identify invasive species, their extent, and their impact on native plant communities.
2. Selective Removal Methods – Best practices will be employed for invasive species control, including mechanical removal (hand-pulling, cutting, or mowing), prescribed burning, and targeted herbicide application where necessary. Removal efforts will be scheduled to minimize disturbance to native species and pollinators.
3. Minimizing Soil Disturbance – To prevent erosion and the spread of invasive species, removal efforts will incorporate soil protection strategies, such as leaving root structures intact when appropriate or using erosion control blankets in sensitive areas.
4. Follow-Up Monitoring & Adaptive Management – Regular monitoring will track the effectiveness of removal efforts and identify any re-establishment of invasive species. Maintenance strategies, such as spot treatments or supplemental native plantings, will be implemented as needed.
5. Restoration with Native Vegetation – Following invasive species removal, native plants will be reintroduced to outcompete invasives and restore habitat for pollinators and other wildlife. Seed mixes and plant selections will align with BWSR guidelines to ensure long-term ecological health.

### **4. Describe how the long-term maintenance and management needs of the parcel being restored with these funds will be met and financed into the future.**

A portion of the funds will be allocated for monitoring and replacing plantings over a three-year period, with the County anticipating a 10% replacement rate annually. After the third year, the County will continue monitoring and replacing plantings as necessary.

### **5. Describe how consideration will be given to contracting with Conservation Corps of Minnesota for any restoration activities.**

Carver County will collaborate with the Conservation Corps of Minnesota on all activities, with partnership opportunities identified during Activity 1.

### **6. Provide a statement indicating that evaluations will be completed on parcels where activities were implemented both 1) initially after activity completion and 2) three years later as a follow-up. Evaluations should analyze improvements to the parcel and whether goals have been met, identify any problems with the implementation, and**

**identify any findings that can be used to improve implementation of future restoration efforts at the site or elsewhere.**

Carver County is committed to making this restoration project a signature initiative and a model for the region. To ensure its success, evaluations will be conducted on parcels where activities were implemented at two key intervals: immediately following activity completion and three years later as a follow-up. These evaluations will assess improvements to the park, determine whether restoration goals have been met, and identify any challenges encountered during implementation. Additionally, findings from these assessments will be used to refine and enhance future restoration efforts, both at this site and in other locations, reinforcing Carver County's long-term commitment to high-quality ecological restoration.

## Attachments

### Required Attachments

#### *Map*

File: [5905a928-31f.pdf](#)

#### *Alternate Text for Map*

The attached figure is a map from LMRP's Natural Resource Management Plan, highlighting Management Unit #1, where the work will be performed....

#### *Financial Capacity*

Title	File
Signed Single Audit Report 2024	<a href="#">dea1f8e4-110.pdf</a>
Signed Compliance Report 2024	<a href="#">67d34f35-7fa.pdf</a>
2024 Annual Comprehensive Financial Statement	<a href="#">cee1d333-dd1.pdf</a>
Trial Balance Report	<a href="#">7a186f7c-6f4.pdf</a>
Revenue Expenditure Report	<a href="#">a4080596-e5b.pdf</a>

#### *Board Resolution or Letter*

Title	File
Board resolution received late 5-6-25	<a href="#">9b9ce1e7-723.pdf</a>

### Supplemental Attachments

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

Title	File
LMRP Natural Resource Management Plan	<a href="#">ea013d50-dec.pdf</a>
Copy of LCCMR by Grant Cost by Activity	<a href="#">b5950629-b26.pdf</a>
2026-05-28 PM Change Form	<a href="#">bf8477b9-3b0.pdf</a>

### Difference between Proposal and Work Plan

#### *Describe changes from Proposal to Work Plan Stage*

Addressed Comments and revisions, replaced outdated audit reports, replaced spreadsheet showing grant cost by activity

## 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?**

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

**Does your project include the pre-design, design, construction, or renovation of a building, trail, campground, or other fixed capital asset costing \$10,000 or more or large-scale stream or wetland restoration?**

No

**Do you propose using an appropriation from the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund to conduct a project that provides children's services (as defined in Minnesota Statutes section 299C.61 Subd.7 as "the provision of care, treatment, education, training, instruction, or recreation to children")?**

No

**Provide the name(s) and organization(s) of additional individuals assisting in the completion of this project:**

Martin Walsh, Carver County Parks and Recreation Director, and Lance Bernard, Carver County Consultant

**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