

# Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund 2009 Phase 1 Request for Proposals (RFP)

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**LCCMR ID: B11**

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**Project Title:** Non-Metropolitan Regional Parks and Natural/Scenic Area Acquisition

**Total Project Budget:** \$ \$4,170,000

**Proposed Project Time Period for the Funding Requested:** July 2009 - June 2012 (3 yrs)

**Other Non-State Funds:** \$ 3,000,000

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**First Name:** Wayne

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**Sponsoring Organization:** DNR

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<b>Region:</b>	<b>County Name:</b>	<b>City / Township:</b>
Statewide	Statewide	

**Summary:** These programs provide matching grants to help local governments acquire shoreland; large, contiguous areas; and threatened habitat in rapidly growing areas and where land use changes may limit future opportunities.

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**Main Proposal:** 0808-1-006-proposal-2009\_main\_propo

**Project Budget:** 0808-1-006-budget-RFP\_2009\_Project Budget.xls

**Qualifications:** 0808-1-006-qualifications-resume.doc

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# MAIN PROPOSAL

**PROJECT TITLE:** Non-Metropolitan Regional Parks and Natural/Scenic Area Acquisition

## I. PROJECT STATEMENT

Opportunities for local governments to acquire and protect larger land parcels for existing or new regional parks outside the seven county metro area and natural and scenic areas statewide are rapidly diminishing as larger landholdings are broken up into smaller parcels for development, especially in high growth areas, shore lands, and areas where land use changes may limit future opportunities. The overall aim of this project is to ensure adequate outdoor recreation areas and protection of natural and scenic resources by helping and encouraging local governments to acquire and hold such land for public use. This aim is achieved through competitive, matching grants that provide financial incentive and ensure the land and natural resources are retained for public use in perpetuity.

## II. DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT RESULTS

**Result 1:** Regional Park Grants      **Budget:** \$3,000,000

The requested funding will provide about two to five matching grants to public regional park organizations outside the seven county metropolitan area for acquisition of approximately 500-1,000 acres for new or expanded regional parks. One grant round is proposed. These grants require a 60% state/40% local match. The local match for projects funded at the requested level would meet or exceed \$2,000,000. Regional Park Grant requests for acquisition projects in spring, 2008 exceeded \$14 million.

<b>Deliverable</b>	<b>Completion Date</b>
1. Complete application round	June, 2009
2. Complete 2-5 grant agreements	December, 2009
3. Project closeouts	By June, 2012

**Result 2:** Natural and Scenic Area Grants      **Budget:** \$1,000,000

The requested funding will provide about two to six matching grants to cities, counties, townships and school districts for acquisition of approximately 100 – 200 acres for new or expanded natural and scenic areas. One grant round is proposed. These grants require a 50% state/50% local match. The local match for projects funded at the requested level would meet or exceed \$1 million.

<b>Deliverable</b>	<b>Completion Date</b>
1. Complete application round	June, 2009
2. Complete 2-6 grant agreements	December, 2009
3. Project closeouts	By June, 2012

**Result 3. Administrative/Personnel Costs Budget: \$170,000**

The requested funding will be used to support personnel costs for administering the grant programs. Grant staff persons are involved in grant solicitation, evaluation and ranking, grant agreement management, project billings, project inspections, and compliance monitoring.

As shown in the Project Budget, work program approval is requested for personnel expenses to be incurred by three DNR classified staff involved in administering these grant programs. Payment of classified staff with Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund money will not result in supplanting of the regular budget. A cost coding system is used to document the hours spent by each staff person in administering the program. Two grants staff would each contribute about ¼ Full Time Equivalent (FTE) per year and the program manager would contribute about 1/8 FTE per year. The total staff contribution will be just under 2 FTE over the three year project period.

<b>Deliverable</b>	<b>Completion Date</b>
1. Complete application round	June, 2009
2. Complete grant agreements	December, 2009
3. Project closeouts	By June, 2012

**III. PROJECT STRATEGY AND TIMELINE**

**A. Project Partners**

Partners are local governments and school districts. They will provide match dollars as well as covering costs of appraisals, any required archeological/historical surveys, permits, etc. They will also assume all operations and maintenance costs.

**B. Impact**

The greatest impacts of the Regional Park Grant program to date have been in rapidly growing and developing counties directly north of the Twin Cities and, more generally, in the southern half of the state where local governments are more actively involved in developing county or regional park systems. The main impacts of the Natural and Scenic Area grant program have been in the seven county metro area itself and the northern metro “collar counties”, though several projects are also scattered throughout other areas of the state. To date 4,471 acres have been acquired with assistance from these grant programs (See Program History map). The amount requested would help fund about one fourth of the grant amount requested by applicants in the spring of 2008

**C. Time**

This is an ongoing program. The request is for one annual grant solicitation. An additional \$4 million would be needed to fund a second year grant round resulting in a similar level of project activity. There is no grant limit for Regional Park Grants and this funding level would help address larger land acquisition projects, such as the Bertram Chain of Lakes, that involve multi-million dollar investments by local governments.

**D. Long-Term Strategy (if applicable)**

A recent analysis indicates that an additional 10,000 acres of regional parkland must be acquired in the growth corridor outside the seven-county metropolitan area to meet the same regional park acres/person ratio. Another report by the University of Minnesota estimates an additional 26,750 acres of regional parkland is needed in several “urban complexes” throughout the state by 2030 to meet that standard. The Regional Park Grant program helps accelerate local government efforts to address this deficit while opportunities to acquire larger land parcels are still available.

The long-term strategy for the Natural and Scenic Area Grant program is to provide an incentive to local governments to protect natural and scenic resources that do not qualify for state designation, but have important regional or local significance. These areas complement state protected areas and provide close-to-home opportunities for nature study, science and environmental education, species protection, outdoor recreation, and appreciation of scenic vistas. These areas can play a role in addressing the increasing disconnect between people and nature.

## Project Budget

### IV. TOTAL PROJECT REQUEST BUDGET

<b>BUDGET ITEM</b> <i>(See list of Eligible &amp; Non-Eligible Costs, p. 17)</i>	<b>AMOUNT</b>	<b>% FTE</b>
Wayne Sames, Grants Program Manager (cost for 3 years)	\$44,840	13%
Audrey Mularie, Grants Program staff (cost for 3 years)	\$63,750	25%
Joe Hiller, Grants Program staff (cost for 3 years)	\$63,750	25%
<b>Acquisition:</b> Regional Park Grants: estimated 500-1,000 acres to be acquired and title held by local governments	\$3,000,000	
Natural and Scenic Area Grants: estimated 100-200 acres to be acquired and title held by local governments and school districts	\$1,000,000	
<b>TOTAL PROJECT BUDGET REQUEST TO LCCMR</b>	<b>\$4,170,000</b>	

### V. OTHER FUNDS

<b>SOURCE OF FUNDS</b>	<b>AMOUNT</b>	<b>Status</b>
<b>Remaining \$ From Previous Trust Fund Appropriation:</b> Funds appropriated in 2008 for the Wright County Bertram Chain of Lakes project: grant agreement is pending LCCMR final approval of the work program, expected in fall of 2008.	\$1,000,000	Not legally obligated
<b>Other Non-State \$ Being Leveraged During Project Period:</b> Regional Park Grants: 40% local match will meet or exceed \$2,000,000. Natural and Scenic Area Grants: 50% match will meet or exceed \$1,000,000.	\$3,000,000	Local governments must spend \$7 million to get \$4 million
<b>Other State \$ Being Spent During Project Period:</b> The State Remediation Fund Grant program (MS 115B.17, Subd. 7 and 115B.20, Subd. 2) may have funds available from damages paid to the State from closed landfill operators to rehabilitate, restore or acquire natural resources. Some of these funds have been used in the past to supplement Trust Fund dollars for acquisition of Natural and Scenic Areas or Regional Parks.	\$200,000-\$400,000	Pending deposit in the fund
<b>In-Kind Services During Project Period:</b> Financial management services by other DNR staff (processing grant agreements, reimbursement payments, etc.).	\$5,000	
<b>Past Spending:</b> 2008 Trust Fund appropriation for Wright County - Bertram Chain of Lakes Project: \$1 million in Trust Fund dollars to be matched by \$2 million in county and city funds (pending final work program approval). 2007 Trust Fund appropriation: \$1 million, plus about \$3 million in local funds. About \$419,000 in 2006 Bonding funds spent in 2007. About \$827,000 in Remediation Fund Grants spent in 2007 on related projects.	\$8,250,000	

## **Non-Metropolitan Regional Parks and Natural and Scenic Area Acquisition Project Manager Qualifications and Organization Description**

Project Manager: Wayne Sames  
Affiliation: Department of Natural Resources, Local Grants Program  
Telephone Number: (651) 259-5559

### **Manager, Local Grants Program, DNR (1988 to present)**

Responsible for administration of the state Natural and Scenic Area, Regional Parks (outside the Metro Area), Conservation Partners/Environmental Partnerships, and Outdoor Recreation grant programs and the federal Land and Water Conservation Fund (LAWCON) grant funds allocated to Minnesota.

Local Grants Program staff are responsible for the annual project solicitation; evaluation and ranking process; development of grant agreements; review and approval of reimbursement requests; project inspection and closeout; and post-completion monitoring.

### **Organization Description**

The Local Grants Program is a unit of the Office of Management and Budget Services, Department of Natural Resources.