

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

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**LCCMR ID: B13**

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**Project Title:** Implementing Forests for the Future Program (Forest Legacy)

**Total Project Budget:** \$ \$6,300,000

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

**Other Non-State Funds:** \$ 3,500,000

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**Last Name:** Peterson

**Sponsoring Organization:** DNR

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**Region:**

Northeast, Central,  
Southeast

**County Name:**

Itasca, Koochiching, Lake, Rice,  
St. Louis, Wabash

**City / Township:**

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**Summary:** This project will implement Forests for the Future Program. Results: Identification of priority forests; Landscape-scale easement acquisition project; Implement systematic program for evaluating and reporting long-term sustainability of protected forests.

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**Main Proposal:** 0808-1-011-proposal-2009 main proposal August 21, 2008 final.doc

**Project Budget:** 0808-1-011-budget-RFP\_2009\_Project Budget\_final.xls

**Qualifications:** 0808-1-011-qualifications-Project MGR 2009 LCCMR Forest Legacy Proposal .do

**Map:** 0808-1-011-maps-LCCMR 2009 Project Map.pdf

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# PROJECT TITLE: Implementing Forests for the Future (Forest Legacy Program)

## I. PROJECT STATEMENT

The state faces a major challenge today and in the future due to the thousands of acres of privately owned forest being sold across Minnesota. These working forestland sales can impact the state's ability to sustain its forests for multiple public benefits. The major focus of this proposal will be the protection of over 49,000 acres of private forestland through the use of working forest conservation easements that will prevent forestland conversion. This proposal will also contribute to the implementation of the Forests for the Future Program that was established by the Minnesota Legislature during 2008 (Minnesota Statutes, Section 84.66). The Minnesota Forests for the Future Program:

- Conserves private forestlands throughout the state that, in combination with public forestlands, provides: 1) public recreational access; 2) timber production and other economic opportunities; and 3) ecological values.
- Defines a comprehensive set of goals, strategies, and targets that respond to land development and fragmentation, climate change, recreational access, and changes in the forest economy.
- Builds on past efforts that used federal, state (including ETF), and private funds to acquire easements on over 65,000 acres of private forestland in the past 9 years.

This project advances the implementation of several of the Statewide Preservation and Conservation Plan's recommendations (Land Use Forest 1 & 2, and Habitat 1 & 3).

This proposal has results in three areas:

- Identification of priority forests;
- Acquisition of priority forest using conservation easements and other tools;
- Development and implementation of a responsive program management system to ensure on-going evaluation and reporting of the long-term sustainability of protected forestlands.

## II. DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT RESULTS

### Result 1: Identification of priority forests.

**Budget: \$30,000**

This project will use a GIS-based decision support tool to identify and prioritize parcels critical for protecting large blocks of forestland from parcelization, conversion, and fragmentation. This result will build on the township scale analysis that was completed for the Statewide Preservation and Conservation Plan using methodology developed by the Nature Conservancy (FLEET model) and the Natural Resources Research Institute. This system integrates recreation, economic and environmental values and provides statewide indices of important forestlands at the township level and below. This will implement recommendation #8 from the program's stakeholder Advisory Team report.

#### Deliverable

#### Completion Date

1. Completion of a map of priority forestlands (based on recreation, economics, and ecology) for application of easements, fee-title acquisition or other conservation tools. **6/30/2010**
2. Refined acreage targets and priority lands for the Forests for the Future Program **9/30/2010**

### Result 2: Acquisition of priority forests.

**Budget: \$6,000,000**

The Koochiching 2&3 Forest Legacy project has been identified by MNDNR and the Federal Forest Legacy Program as a priority easement project (ranked #3 nationally out of over 80 projects submitted in FFY09). \$3.5 million in Federal FY08 funding has been awarded to the first phase of

this project and will be matched by 2008 Capital bonding. This second phase has been recommended by the President for Federal FY09 funding (\$3.5 million requested) and will require up to \$6 million in state match to fully fund. Appraisal of this project is set to begin fall of 2008. Up to 10% of the funds will be used to acquire key fee title acquisitions involving critical trail segments or other parcels with high public values.

<b>Deliverable</b>	<b>Completion Date</b>
1. Acquire conservation easements on up to 49,000 acres (see map)	<b>6/30/2011</b>

**Result 3: Responsive program management system for Forests for the Future**

**Budget: \$270,000**

This project will develop and implement a system that integrates economic, recreational, and ecological measures for evaluating program results and ensuring continuous improvement of the Minnesota Forests for the Future Program. This will implement recommendation #14 from the program's stakeholder Advisory Team report.

<b>Deliverable</b>	<b>Completion Date</b>
1. Develop and pilot an integrated landscape-scale evaluation protocol	<b>6/30/2010</b>
2. Apply and test the evaluation protocol on up to 25 easements (65,000+ acres) and report results	<b>6/30/2012</b>

**III. PROJECT STRATEGY AND TIMELINE**

**A. Project Partners**

**Organizations:** U.S. Forest Service is expected to be a funding partner for conservation easement projects.

**Project Team:** Richard Peterson, MNDNR Forestry (Results 1,2,3); Andy Holdsworth, MNDNR OMB (Results 1,3); Keith Wendt, MNDNR OMB (Results 1,3).

**B. Project Impact:** This project will directly protect up to 49,000 acres of forests from parcelization and development in northeast Minnesota in Koochiching County. Other potential projects are located in Lake, Itasca, Rice, Wabasha, Winona, Huston, Cass, Crow Wing, Hubbard, and Becker Counties in NE, NW, Central and SE Minnesota. It will provide a prototype evaluation protocol and evaluation results for up to 25 easements (65,000+acres) in seven counties. The GIS decision support tool will also help ensure that future public and private investments are directed to high priority forestlands throughout the forested regions of the state. The evaluation system will help ensure and that these lands continue to sustain ecological, recreational, and economic values for which they were purchased.

**C. Time:** The timeline for this project is July 1, 2009 to June 30, 2012. Forest Service match funds for projects are anticipated from Federal FY2009.

**D. Long-Term Strategy:** This project will play a critical role in implementing the Minnesota Forests for the Future Program. The program's stakeholder Advisory Team highlighted the critical need for identification of priority forests and refining the preliminary acreage targets (270,000 to 530,000 acres within the next 25 years as described in *Minnesota Forests for the Future: Conserving Minnesota's working forestlands to meet the state's future recreation, economic, and ecological needs*. MNDNR. 2008. St. Paul, MN). Result 1 will meet this need using innovative GIS tools in the hands of an interdisciplinary team. Result 3 will build the prototype of a credible system for continuous program improvement that will be implemented by DNR for the long-term success of the program. This system will complement the LCCMR-funded Conservation Easement Stewardship and Enforcement Program Plan to track the long-term sustainability of protected forests.

**Project Budget**  
INSTRUCTIONS AND TEMPLATE (1 PAGE LIMIT)

**IV. TOTAL PROJECT REQUEST BUDGET**

<b>BUDGET ITEM</b>	<b>AMOUNT</b>	<b>% FTE</b>
<b>Personnel:</b> Prioritization and Evaluation Coordinator to oversee Results 1 & 3 (new 1/2 FTE for 3 years)	\$ 111,000	50%
GIS analyst for project prioritization (Result 1)	\$28,000	25%
<b>Contracts:</b> Remote sensing for program management system (Result 3)	\$ 28,000	
Field testing of program management system (Result 3)	\$ 90,000	
<b>Acquisition (Including Easements):</b> 49,000 acres conservation easements (Result 2)	\$ 6,000,000	
<b>Other:</b> Satellite imagery for program management system (Result 3)	\$ 14,000	
Supplies: Vehicle fleet costs	\$ 24,000	
Supplies: Map and report printing, field supplies	\$ 5,000	
<b>TOTAL PROJECT BUDGET REQUEST TO LCCMR</b>	<b>\$ 6,300,000</b>	

**V. OTHER FUNDS**

<b>SOURCE OF FUNDS</b>	<b>AMOUNT</b>	<b>Status</b>
<b>Remaining \$ From Previous Trust Fund Appropriation (if applicable):</b> 2007 appropriation Forest Legacy Easements	\$2,000,000	<i>5 Projects pending</i>
<b>Other Non-State \$ Being Leveraged During Project Period:</b> US Forest Service FFY09 and FFY10 Forest Legacy Appropriation	\$ 3,500,000	<i>Pending</i>
<b>Other State \$ Being Spent During Project Period:</b>	\$ -	-
<b>In-kind Services During Project Period:</b> Project management and acquisition services including easement negotiations and drafting, development of property reports, and management plans	\$40,000	
<b>Past Spending:</b> Appraisal costs	\$ 30,000	

## Project Manager Qualifications

**Project Manager:** Richard Peterson is the Forest Legacy Coordinator for the DNR Division of Forestry. His program responsibilities are the Forest Legacy Program, the newly established Forests for the Future Program and the Upper Mississippi Forest Partnership. He has a BS in Botany from the College of Biological Sciences at the University of Minnesota, and a MS in Forest Management from the University of Minnesota. He worked in several field locations in northern Minnesota for 6 years. For 16 years, beginning in 1989, he managed forestry programs in south-central Minnesota as Area Forester in Faribault. Since 1999, he has managed the Forest Legacy Program for the Department of Natural Resources. During that time he has been project manager for all 25 Forest Legacy Projects completed in Minnesota totaling nearly 66,000 acres and valued at nearly \$24 million.

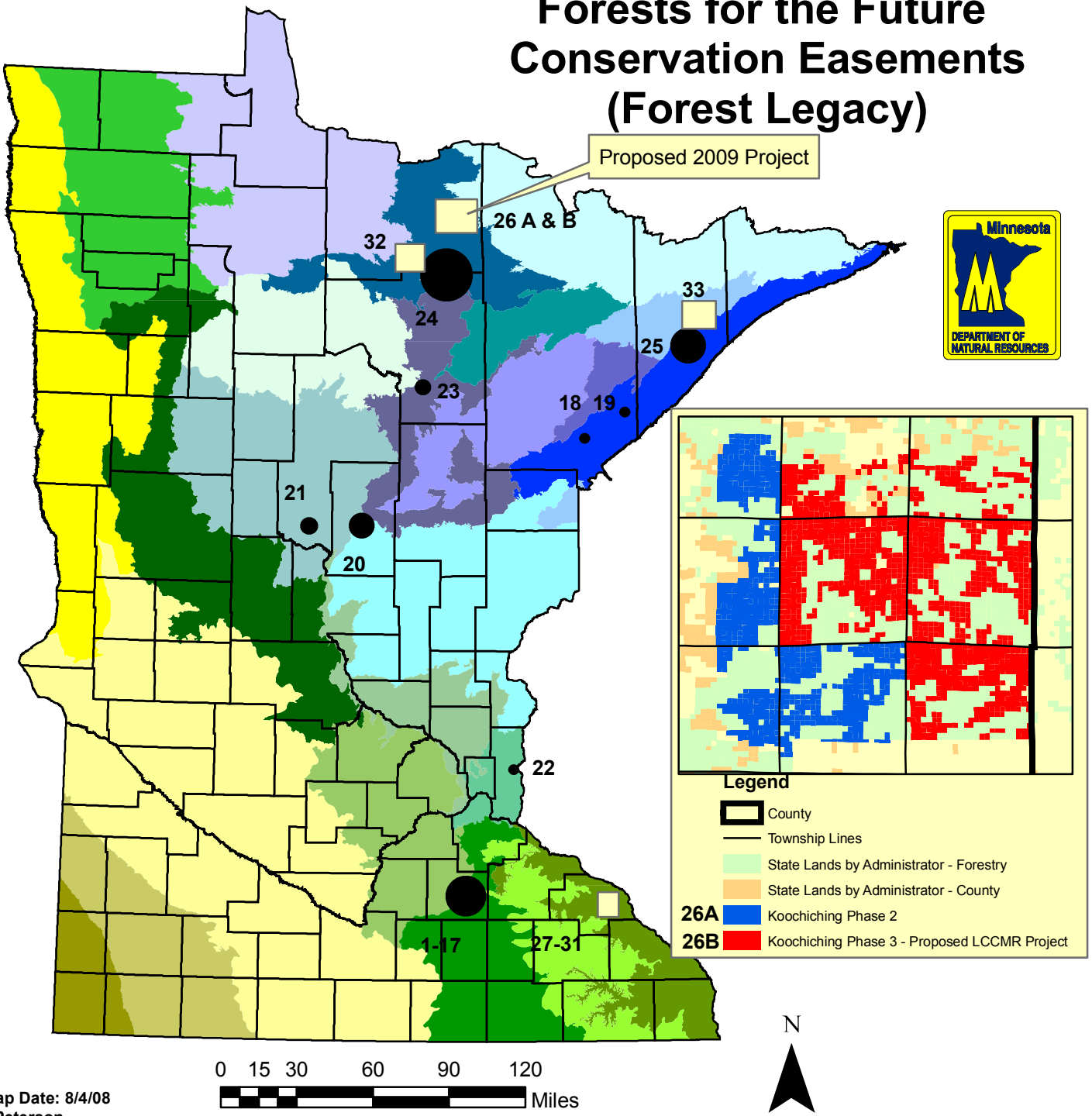
**Team Member:** Andy Holdsworth, PhD, is Science Policy Coordinator in DNR's Office of Management and Budget Services. Andrew Holdsworth works to advance conservation planning, performance measurement, and integrated resource management. He received a PhD in Conservation Biology from the University of Minnesota. His research expertise is in forest ecology, invasive species, fire ecology, and sustainable forest management. In addition to agency and academic work, he has worked in the non-profit sector as a science coordinator for landscape-scale conservation planning efforts in the southwestern U.S. and as a visiting researcher for an Amazon research institute.

**Team Member:** Keith Wendt has been with the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources since 1981. He now manages the Policy, Research, and Planning Section within DNR's Office of Management and Budget. Wendt's team of resource scientists and policy planners work to advance integrated resource management, conservation performance measurement, research, and strategic planning. He has been building integrated policy frameworks to address complex forest issues for over a decade. Wendt previously served as DNR Plant Ecologist and Research Supervisor for the Natural Heritage Program. Prior to DNR, Wendt was an academic staff member at the University of Wisconsin Arboretum, where he co-founded the journal "Restoration and Management Notes" – a journal of the Society for Ecological Restoration. He did MS degree work in Vegetation Ecology and Environmental Planning at the University of Wisconsin, Madison.

## **Organization Description**

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources works with citizens to conserve and manage the state's natural resources, to provide outdoor recreation opportunities, and provide for commercial uses of natural resources in a way that creates a sustainable quality of life. This mission requires sharing stewardship with citizens and partners, working together to address often-competing interests.

# 2009 LCCMR Proposal Forests for the Future Conservation Easements (Forest Legacy)



Map Date: 8/4/08  
RPeterson

- Completed Projects ● \* Indicates ETF Funds**
- \*1-17 Rice County Big Woods  
1,171 acres
  - 18-19 North Duluth 768 acres
  - \*20-21 Brainerd Lakes 1&2  
4,770 acres
  - \*22 Arcola Mills (Metro Corridors)  
47 acres
  - \*23 Sugar Hills 1,659 acres
  - 24 Koochiching-Washington 51,163 acres
  - \*25 Clair A Nelson Memorial Forest 6,252 acres

**Proposed LCCMR Project**  
26B Koochiching 3 49,000 acres

- Current Projects □**
- 26 A Koochiching 2 27,500 acres
  - \*27-31 Wabasha Blufflands 1,600 acres
  - 32 Koochiching 4 13,000 acres
  - 33 Marlow Timberlands 8,500 acres

Additional projects have been proposed  
in the NW, NE, Central, and SE.

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