

Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund 2009 Phase 2 Request for Proposals (RFP)

LCCMR ID: 070-B4

Project Title: Implementing Protection Strategies for Minnesota Deepwater Lakes

Total Project Budget: \$ \$3,422,704

Proposed Project Time Period for the Funding Requested: June 30, 2012

Other Non-State Funds: \$ \$0.00

Priority: B4. Deep Water Lakes

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Sponsoring Organization: Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR)

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Region:	County Name:	City / Township:
Central	Aitkin, Becker, Cass, Crow Wing, Hubbard, Isanti,	

Summary: This project will provide technical assistance through local units of government and deliver deep lake protection through the strategic implementation of established tools within watersheds and on sensitive lands.

Main Proposal: 1008-2-032-proposal-Deepwater Lake Protect - Main Proposal.doc

Project Budget: 1008-2-032-budget-Deepwater Lakes Protect - Projected Budget.xls

Qualifications: 1008-2-032-qualifications-Deepwater Lakes Proj Mgr.doc

Map: 1008-2-032-maps-Deepwater Lake protect - Map.pdf

Letter of Resolution:

MAIN PROPOSAL

PROJECT TITLE: Implementing Protection Strategies for Minnesota Deepwater Lakes

I. PROJECT STATEMENT

Minnesota’s Statewide Conservation and Preservation Plan identifies protection and preservation of deepwater lakes as a high priority (Recommendation 6C, page 78). Coldwater fish species (cisco, trout and burbot) supported by these lakes serve as indicators of overall ecosystem health and water quality. Development pressure on the shorelines and watersheds of these high-value waters threatens the sustainability of these coldwater species by increasing nutrient loading, which reduces the deepwater oxygen levels upon which these species depend.

The North Central Lakes Collaborative (NCLC) has grown from the 2003 Governor’s Clean Water Initiative. NCLC proposes to pilot a process with two main goals: 1) to assist local partners with a detailed analysis of watershed conditions, and 2) to provide resources for protection and rehabilitation of critical areas within the watersheds. This project will provide technical assistance to local units of government and lake associations, and deliver deep lake protection through the strategic implementation of already established tools within watersheds and over ecologically sensitive lands. Local governments and lake associations will be able to apply targeted implementation of the most appropriate and cost-effective tools. This project will achieve the goals by selecting a suite of priority lakes in each of seven counties in north central Minnesota for implementation. To ensure that implementation of this project meets local needs, interest bids will be requested from among the list of priority lakes to engage only those groups with desire and the necessary organizational capacity to be successful. One or more interest bids will be accepted from each county in the project area (these will become the “project lakes”). We will engage with our partners to use project dollars to leverage private investments.

II. DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT RESULTS

Result 1: Lake Selection and Assessment

Budget: \$ 100,667

NCLC will produce a filtered list of potential lakes and solicit interest bids from local governments and/or citizen groups representing the lakes of interest in the seven target counties. Bids will be evaluated and one to two project lakes per county will be selected for participation in this project. The reduced set of lakes will then be assessed to estimate sources of nutrient loading under current conditions and future land management and build-out scenarios. Priority natural resource inventory analysis will be conducted within each county. A GIS map showing important features, sources of nutrients, and areas of conservation priority will be developed within project watersheds.

Deliverable	Completion Date
1. Project lake selection	August 2009
2. Natural resource inventory	January 2010
3. Watershed modeling & assessment	February 2010
4. Map development	February 2010

Result 2: Participatory Decision Analysis & Implementation

Budget: \$ 381,371

Local governments will lead planning and implementation under this project proposal. NCLC will work with local governmental and non-governmental entities to develop a participatory engagement process that will help lake associations strengthen management plans for water quality and ecosystem function. Using the assessment products from Result 1, technical staff and citizen lake representatives will integrate lake management plans with priority activities that result from the watershed assessment, develop an action plan, and define roles for implementation of strategic protection activities within the watershed. The process will include identifying and selecting management tools (e.g., rain gardens, shoreline revegetation, conservation easements, stormwater management) appropriate for stated goals; developing local trainings and outreach materials that

encourage best management practices (BMPs); and implementing the chosen strategies. For priority lakes without existing management plans, NCLC will sponsor Healthy Lakes and Rivers Partnership training to develop a lake management plan.

Deliverable	Completion Date
1. Flexible civic engagement process	December 2009
2. Civic engagement implementation	April 2010
3. Implementation plans	June 2010
4. Healthy Lakes & Rivers Program	December 2010
5. Education & marketing materials	March 2011

Result 3: Implementation, Evaluation and Project Assessment **Budget: \$2,940,667**

This project will apply a wide range of implementation strategies as appropriate for the “project lakes”. These strategies will vary in cost but the ones that will cost the most will likely be those involving easements and fee title acquisition. NCLC will emphasize priority funding of cost-share projects or where there is non-state match on the table. Financial assistance will be provided for some aspects of the implementation plans to ensure LGU capacity to provide technical guidance. NCLC will track implementation progress and success using existing project reporting tools such as E-link, and evaluate progress toward stated goals.

Deliverable	Completion Date
1. Implementation of lake plans	June 2012
2. Evaluation of progress	June 2012

III. PROJECT STRATEGY AND TIMELINE

A. Project Partners

Participation in the deep lakes initiative by each of the target county Soil and Water Conservation Districts (Aitkin, Becker, Cass, Crow Wing, Hubbard, Itasca, Ottertail and & St. Louis counties) will be coordinated by Dan Steward from the Board of Water & Soil Resources, which will also be the fiscal sponsor. Non-governmental collaboration on lake selection, land use assessments, public engagement and implementation will come from NCLC partners; Kent Montgomery of The Nature Conservancy; and Phil Hunsicker of 1,000 Friends of Minnesota. Stephanie Vandal, MPCA NCLC coordinator, will provide overall project coordination. Dan Steward, BWSR, will be the LCCMR project manager.

B. Project Impact

This project will have direct impact on targeted deepwater lakes in Minnesota. Cisco are used as an indicator species of quality deepwater habitat, but all aquatic species and higher trophic levels they support will benefit from the activities implemented under this project. This project will be a pilot for several protection strategies recommended by the Clean Water Council’s Protection Strategy Workgroup, including 1) utilizing a watershed assessment framework, 2) focusing on “downward trending” waters, 3) serving as a clearing house for up-to-date protection tools and 4) effectively engaging the citizenry in existing monitoring efforts and the protection strategy decision process.

C. Time

This project will require a total of \$3,422,705 over three years.

D. Long-Term Strategy (if applicable)

The strategic application of tools to meet deep water lake conservation goals as demonstrated by this project will be transferable to other lakes, pending a secure source of funding for the protection strategies described in the Clean Water Legacy Act.

Project Budget

IV. TOTAL PROJECT REQUEST BUDGET

BUDGET ITEM <i>(See list of Eligible & Non-Eligible Costs, p. 17)</i>	AMOUNT	% FTE
Personnel:	\$ -	%
NCLC Coordinator: overall project coordination; 3 yrs	\$ 122,000	70%
Contracts:	\$ -	
Contract for 3.5 FTE SWCD field staff to provide technical and implementation assistance: 3 yrs	\$ 340,704	
GIS technical assistance	\$ 25,000	
Grants to LGU's for covering closing/real estate transaction fees for donated conservation easements	\$ 200,000	
Equipment/Tools:	\$ -	
Acquisition (Including Easements):	\$ -	
1000 acres of riparian forest easements held by state (BWSR's RIM program), LGU, or NGO	\$ 2,500,000	
Restoration:	\$ -	
1.25 shoreland miles of restored shoreline and 2.5 miles of naturally buffered shoreline	\$ 200,000	
Other:	\$ -	
GIS Parcel layer data	\$ 35,000	
TOTAL PROJECT BUDGET REQUEST TO LCCMR	\$ 3,422,704	

V. OTHER FUNDS

SOURCE OF FUNDS	AMOUNT	Status
Remaining \$ From Previous Trust Fund Appropriation (if applicable): <i>How much Trust Fund money remains not spent or legally obligated from any previous Trust Fund appropriation for any directly related project of the proposing project, project manager, or project organization? Specify the appropriation.</i>	\$ -	<i>Unspent or Not Legally Obligated</i>
Other Non-State \$ Being Leveraged During Project Period: <i>What additional non-state cash \$ will be spent on the project during the funding period? For each individual sum, list out the source of the funds, the amount, and indicate whether the funds are secured or pending approval.</i>	Up to \$1 Million potential leveraging of easement donation	<i>Pending</i>
Other State \$ Being Spent During Project Period: <i>What additional state cash \$ (e.g. bonding, other grants) will be spent on the project during the funding period? For each individual sum, list out the source of the funds, the amount, and indicate whether the funds are secured or pending approval.</i>	\$140,000 (\$120K BWSR grant, \$40K conv design scorecard)	<i>Pending</i>
In-kind Services During Project Period: <i>What in-kind services will be provided during the funding period? List type of service(s) and estimated value. In-kind services listed should be specific to the project.</i>	\$ -	
Past Spending: <i>List money spent or to be spent on this specific project, cash and/or in-kind, for 2-year timeframe prior to July 1, 2009</i>	\$ 160,000	

Project Manager Qualifications:

The project manager for the grant will be Dan Steward, BWSR Board conservationist, located in the Brainerd BWSR office. Dan has over 20 years experience in implementing BWSR programs, and working with SWCD's. Dan is the lead BWSR field employee for an 8 county area for north-central Minnesota.

Organization Description:

The MN Board of Water and soil Resources (BWSR) will serve as the lead state agency for this grant. The BWSR has the strongest connection with SWCD's and their implementation role of soil and water conservation practices in MN. The BWSR has historically provided similar grant funds to SWCD's to implement this type of work. We intend to use the existing process to provide financial and administrative oversight.

CISCO LAKES

