

**Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund
2010 Request for Proposals (RFP)**

LCCMR ID: 127-E1

Project Title:

Collaborating to Improve the Minnesota River Valley

LCCMR 2010 Funding Priority:

E. Natural Resource Conservation Planning and Implementation

Total Project Budget: \$ \$950,000

Proposed Project Time Period for the Funding Requested: 3 years, 2010 - 2013

Other Non-State Funds: \$ \$125,000

Summary:

Collaborate with partners to prepare a Minnesota River greenway master plan and implement demonstration projects that improve water quality, restore natural areas, and provide trail-based recreation.

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Sponsoring Organization: Dakota County

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Location:

Region: Metro

County Name: Dakota

City / Township: Burnsville and Eagan Area

_____ Knowledge Base	_____ Broad App.	_____ Innovation
_____ Leverage	_____ Outcomes	
_____ Partnerships	_____ Urgency	_____ TOTAL

MAIN PROPOSAL

PROJECT TITLE: Collaborating to Improve the Minnesota River Valley

I. PROJECT STATEMENT

The nine-mile Minnesota River corridor from Burnsville to Mendota Heights provides an outstanding opportunity to restore some of the State's rarest ecosystems and provide a key trail connection between the popular Big Rivers Regional Trail (120,000 visitors per year) and the planned Minnesota Valley State Trail. Nearly two million Minnesotans live within 20 minutes of this major metropolitan greenway/conservation corridor. A coordinated effort between agencies is needed to address the neglected areas of the river valley and low public use documented in the Minnesota Valley State Recreation Area Management Plan (MN DNR, November, 2006).

Nearly all the corridor is publicly owned and there is significant partner interest to improve water quality, restore wildlife habitat, and provide trail-based recreation between the river channel and the bluff. These opportunities include restoring trout streams, calcareous fens, wetlands, bluffs, and floodplain forest. The opportunity exists to directly connect people and communities with the river and surrounding natural areas.

Goals:

- A) Organize a Greenway Collaborative and coordinate with agencies and groups that have an interest in improving this portion of the corridor
- B) Develop a prioritized master plan and feasibility studies to improve water quality, restore natural areas, and provide diverse trail-based recreation
- C) Implement demonstration projects that improve water quality, wildlife habitat and trails

The project will achieve these goals through the collective resources, specialty, and expertise of the project partners. The implementation plan and feasibility studies will prioritize projects and leverage funding. The demonstration projects will catalyze interest in the river valley to demonstrate how improved water quality, restored natural resources, and trail-based recreation can complement one another.

II. DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT RESULTS

Result 1: Prepare Master Plan and Feasibility Study

Budget: \$125,000

Deliverables

- 1. Establish the collaborative, prepare the master plan, and prioritize water, natural resources, and trail-based recreation improvements
- 2. Complete a feasibility study for the MN River Regional Trail

Completion Date

June 30, 2011

December 31, 2011

Result 2: Water Quality Improvement Demonstration Project(s)

Budget: \$275,000

Deliverables

- 1. Restore at least one of the following; Nichol's Fen, Sibley Fen, Fort Snelling Fen, Kennealy Trout Stream, or other priority water quality initiative
(determined by the partners through the planning process)
- 2. Interpret demonstration project(s) through signage and facilities

Completion Date

June 30, 2013

June 30, 2013

Result 3: Natural Resource Restoration Demonstration Project(s) Budget: \$275,000

Deliverables

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. Restore at least one of the following; Minnesota River floodplain forest, wetlands, or other natural habitat (to be determined by the partnership during the planning process) | Completion Date
June 30, 2013 |
| 2. Interpret natural resource restoration demonstration project(s) through signage and facilities | June 30, 2013 |

Result 4: Trail-Based Recreation Demonstration Project(s) Budget: \$275,000

Deliverables

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. Build one to three miles of trail-based recreation. Construct either a segment of the MN River Regional Trail, trail connections to surrounding communities, or trail-based amenities (to be determined by the partnership and the availability of funding from other sources e.g. SAFETEA-LU). Specific outcomes may include a connection to the Big Rivers Regional Trail, Burnsville Heart of the City, Eagan Cedarvale Redevelopment, or the Cedar Avenue Ped/Bike Bridge | Completion Date
June 30, 2013 |
| 2. Provide consistent signage and visitor orientation improvements throughout the corridor and between agency management units | June 30, 2013 |

III. PROJECT STRATEGY

A. Project Team/Partners

Dakota County (project manager)	Overall greenway coordination, connectivity to Big Rivers and other regional trails.
MN DNR	Water quality, natural resource, and trail-based recreation connections within Fort Snelling State Park and MN River Valley State Trail.
U.S. Fish and Wildlife	Water quality, natural resource, and trail-based recreation connections within NWR Refuge and headquarters
Friends of the MN River Valley	Public outreach, collaboration, and liaison to user groups. Coordinate clean-up activities by volunteers
Lower Minnesota River Watershed	Water quality consultation and coordination.
Cities of Burnsville and Eagan	Natural resource, water quality, and recreational connections to surrounding parks, people, and land use.

B. Timeline Requirements

The master plan for the greenway will need to be completed prior to implementing the demonstration projects. The project will be completed by June 30, 2013.

C. Long-Term Strategy

As public awareness and interest in the Minnesota River increases, funding from sources such as Outdoor Legacy, SAFETEA LU, Metropolitan Parks and Open Space, county, and city resources will extend beyond the timeframe of this grant. Public agencies that manage the land in the corridor will be responsible for long-term management costs.

Project Budget

IV. TOTAL PROJECT REQUEST BUDGET

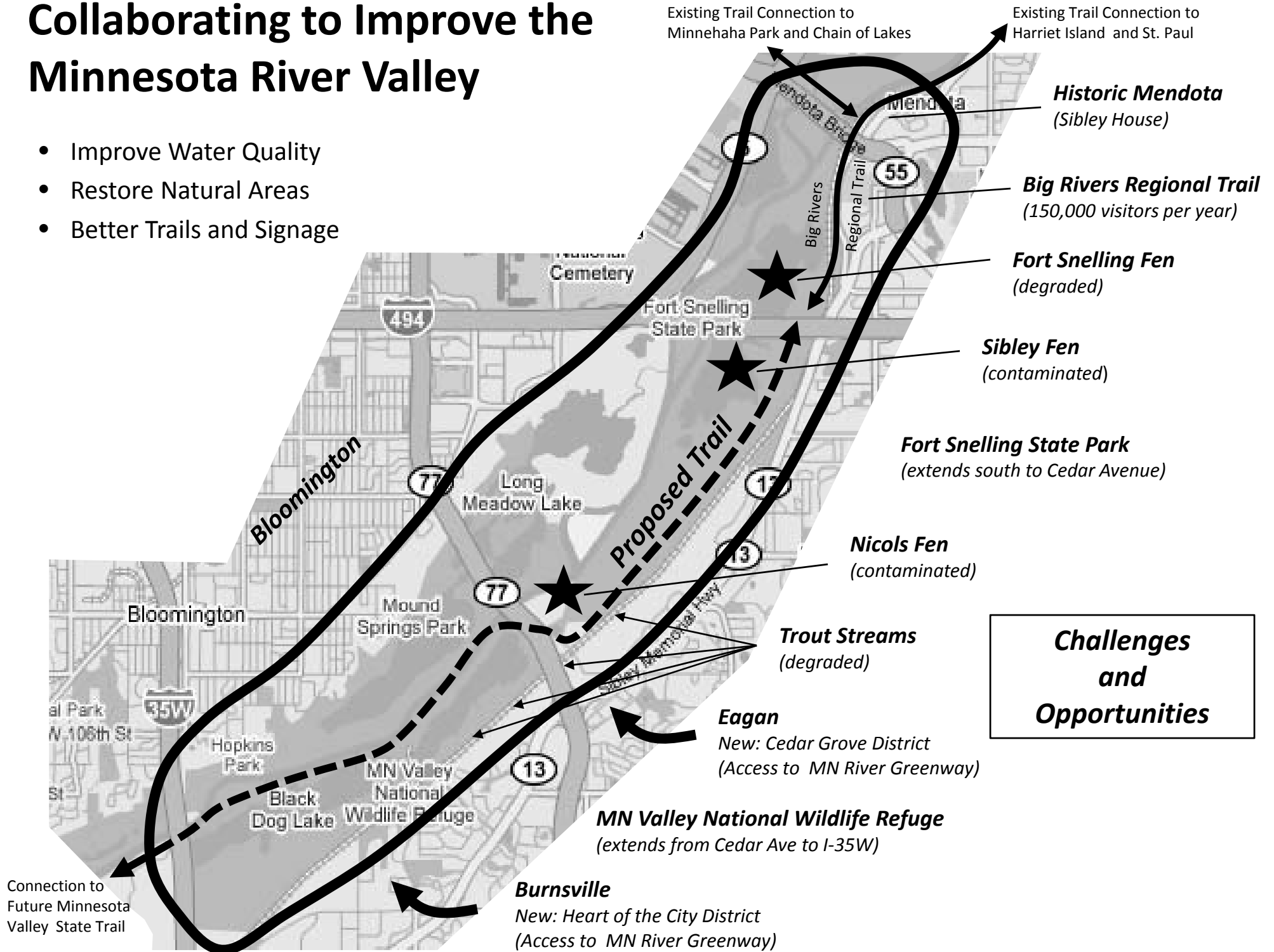
BUDGET ITEM <i>(See list of Eligible & Non-Eligible Costs, p. 13)</i>	AMOUNT
Personnel:	\$ -
Planning Supervisor (1) - Project Manager (15% of time for 3 years, 78% funding for salary and 22% benefits)	\$ 50,000
Senior Planner (1), Master plan preparation (25% of time for years 1 and 2, 78% funding for salary and 22% benefits)	\$ 40,000
GIS Specialist (1), Analysis and mapping (5% of time for year 1 and 2 of project, 78% funding for salary and 22% benefits)	\$ 10,000
Contracts:	
Demonstration Project: Water quality restoration of fen, trout stream, etc. (year 2 and 3 of project)	\$ 275,000
Demonstration Project: Natural resource restoration of forest, wetland, etc. (year 2 and 3 of project)	\$ 275,000
Demonstration Project: One to three miles of trail (year 2 and 3 of project)	\$ 275,000
Feasibility Study: Regional Trail (year 2 of project)	\$ 25,000
TOTAL PROJECT BUDGET REQUEST TO LCCMR	\$ 950,000

V. OTHER FUNDS

Other Non-State \$ Being Applied to Project During Project Period:		<i>Indicate: Secured or Pending</i>
	\$ -	
Sibley Fen Contamination Assessment (EPA: NEPA funds)	\$ 75,000	<i>Secure</i>
Contaminated site clean-up funds (Dakota County Environmental Fund)	\$ 50,000	<i>Secure</i>
Dakota County in-kind staff match (Project Manager salary match)	\$ 50,000	<i>Secure</i>
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in-kind (Refuge staff salary)	\$ 25,000	<i>Secure</i>
Friends of the Minnesota Valley in-kind (Executive Director and volunteer time)	\$ 21,300	<i>Secure</i>
City of Burnsville in-kind (Park Director staff salary)	\$ 25,000	<i>Secure</i>
SAFETEA LU application for regional trail along Black Dog Road	\$ 1,200,000	<i>Pending</i>
Black Dog Road reconstruction (property assessments and grant funds)	\$ 1,800,000	<i>Pending</i>

Collaborating to Improve the Minnesota River Valley

- Improve Water Quality
- Restore Natural Areas
- Better Trails and Signage



Collaborating to Improve the Minnesota River Valley

Professional Qualifications

Project Manager:

Kurt Chatfield, Planning Supervisor

Dakota County Office of Planning

Dakota County Western Service Center

14950 Galaxie Ave

Apple Valley, Minnesota 55124

Education:

M.A. Geography, University of Minnesota

Professional Experience:

Kurt has worked for 20 years as a professional planner for city and county government. At Dakota County, Kurt is a Planning Supervisor in charge of long range plans and projects. He has recently updated the County's Comprehensive Plan and has extensive experience leading corridor studies and park master plans. The following table highlights some of the projects from Dakota County that would be most applicable to this proposal:

Project	Description	Role	Dates
County Comprehensive Plan	County plan for land use, transportation, parks, natural resources	Project Manager	2009
County-wide Greenway Collaborative	New program for a 200-mile system of county-wide greenways consisting of natural resources, water features, and trails	Initiated program, supervise project manager	2009
Active Living Project	New strategies and policies to address the national obesity epidemic by designing our communities to encourage active living (e.g. sidewalks, bike trails, mixed use development).	Project Manager	2008 - present
Vermillion Highlands Regional Park Acquisition Master Plan	Identified the need for a new 480-acre regional park in central Dakota County (Vermillion Highlands at UMORE). Prepared the acquisition master plan and initiated landowner negotiations.	Project Manager	2007
Park Master Plans	Prepared park master plans for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spring Lake Regional Park Reserve • Miesville Ravine Regional Park Reserve • Lake Byllesby Regional Park • Thompson County Park 	Project Manager	2003 - 2005
Dakota County Farmland and Natural Area Program	Prepared the FNAP Plan using funding from LCCMR. Developed the program following the passage of a \$20-million bond referendum. Hired a project manager (Al Singer) to manage the program	Project Manager	2001 - 2002