

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

LCCMR ID: 128-E1

Project Title:

Protection of Critical Conservation Areas in Central MN

LCCMR 2010 Funding Priority:

E. Natural Resource Conservation Planning and Implementation

Total Project Budget: \$ \$595,000

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

Other Non-State Funds: \$ \$370,000

Summary:

Protection of Cass and Crow Wing Countys critical conservation areas by ensuring protection of water resources in urban areas, conservation planning, and minimizing the impact of transportation on natural resources.

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Sponsoring Organization: Region 5 Development Commission

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Location:

Region: Central

County Name: Cass, Crow Wing

City / Township: All within Cass and Crow Wing

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

LCCMR PROJECT TITLE: Protection of Cass and Crow Wing County’s critical conservation areas by addressing storm water runoff, future land use planning, and minimizing the impact of transportation

I. PROJECT STATEMENT

The citizens of Minnesota’s playground, Cass and Crow Wing County, recognize that economic prosperity depends on a healthy and sustainable environment. We must balance long-term plans for conserving and protecting our natural resources with those for ensuring a healthy society and economy.

Both counties share very similar topography and environmental issues as part of the “Brainerd Lakes region” and are experiencing rapid growth, growing at two-times the State average. In both counties water, wetlands, and public lands comprise a large percentage of the available land mass. Since 2006, the two counties, along with local municipalities, business, non-profits, and citizens at large, have participated in a regional planning initiative to identify priorities for preserving our natural resources. Over 70 resolutions of support from these individuals and organizations were adopted, and almost 100 people participated in developing the list of shared priorities.

Other examples of the connectivity of the two counties include: Over 60% of the working adults residing in Cass County actually work in Crow Wing County, the counties share the famous Gull Lake Chain of lakes, transportation corridors, trail systems, school districts, chamber of commerce, and even a jail facility.

Overall Goals: The Brainerd Lakes region is one large community – comprising two counties - with multiple governmental jurisdictions. One local unit of government can not address regional planning alone. It’s an area-wide issue that requires a coordinated public and private effort across every governmental unit and must include active citizen engagement.

How Project Will Achieve These Goals:

- Provide the resources necessary to complete the priorities established through planning efforts over the past three years
- Collaborative public processes that focus on conservation planning with local, state, and federal units of government, private, non-profits, and community residents
- Develop and implement model best practices for successful implementation throughout the two counties

II. DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT RESULTS

Result 1: Conservation planning through a future land use map **Budget: \$ 205,000**

Incorporate conservation planning in the development of a future land use map to inventory and identify high priority natural resource areas for conservation set aside and connectivity. This plan will identify critical conservation areas with a focus on shore land and sensitive wetland areas, future green space, parks, trails, and critical habitat. Through a collaborative public process, a future land use map will be developed for the two counties, including municipalities. This will become the roadmap for how land is utilized in the future to allow economic growth while preserving natural resources.

Deliverable

Conservation planning through a future land use map

Completion Date

06/30/2013

Result 2: Ensure protection of water resources in urban areas by evaluating and improving current programs to establish residential surface water runoff policies Budget: \$ 215,000

Changes to surface water runoff due to new development and redevelopment have significant impacts on Minnesota's natural resources. The population and development projections for Crow Wing and Cass County position our area within the highest range of growth of impervious surfaces in the State (source: *Projected impervious acres change 2020, MPCA*). Local units of government do not have the policies and procedures in place to monitor the impact of development storm water. This proposal will work with community clusters through extensive community engagement to develop and implement model best practices and recommend revisions to comprehensive plans and local ordinances.

Deliverable

Best Management Practices of Storm water/Wastewater Policies and Ordinances

Completion Date

06/30/2013

Result 3: Minimize the impact of transportation on natural resources, especially habitat fragmentation and nonpoint source water pollution, through public engagement, research, design, planning, and best practices, for two rapidly growing counties. Budget: \$ 175,000

Cass and Crow Wing Counties are developing a joint 2030 transportation plan. The plan will preserve the area's exceptional environmental and recreational resources and provide safe, timely, and efficient transportation infrastructure systems. This proposal will enhance civic engagement during the plan development. It will enable the counties to utilize the recommendations of the transportation section of the Minnesota Statewide Conservation and Preservation Plan to develop and implement sustainable transportation research, design, planning, construction practices, regulations and competitive incentive funding that minimize impacts on natural resources especially habitat fragmentation, and nonpoint source water pollution.

Deliverable

Sustainable transportation design to minimize impacts on natural resources

Completion Date

06/30/2013

III. PROJECT STRATEGY

A. Project Team/Partners

Because this is a public/private regional planning initiative, we will collaborate with diverse and numerous entities Mn/DOT, Cass and Crow Wing County, Region 5 Development Commission, Area Transportation Partnership, Brainerd Lakes Chamber, Townships, Cities, MN/DNR, Local Lake Associations, 1000 Friends of Minnesota, Initiative Foundation, Soil and Water Conservation District, Thirty Lakes Watershed, MPCA, Nature Conservancy, Heritage Foundation as well as private citizens and business leaders.

B. Timeline Requirements

All of the projects will commence in July of 2010, with completion of all projects by 06/30/2013.

C. Long-Term Strategy

This funding in combination with partners will complete the goals of this collaborative effort.

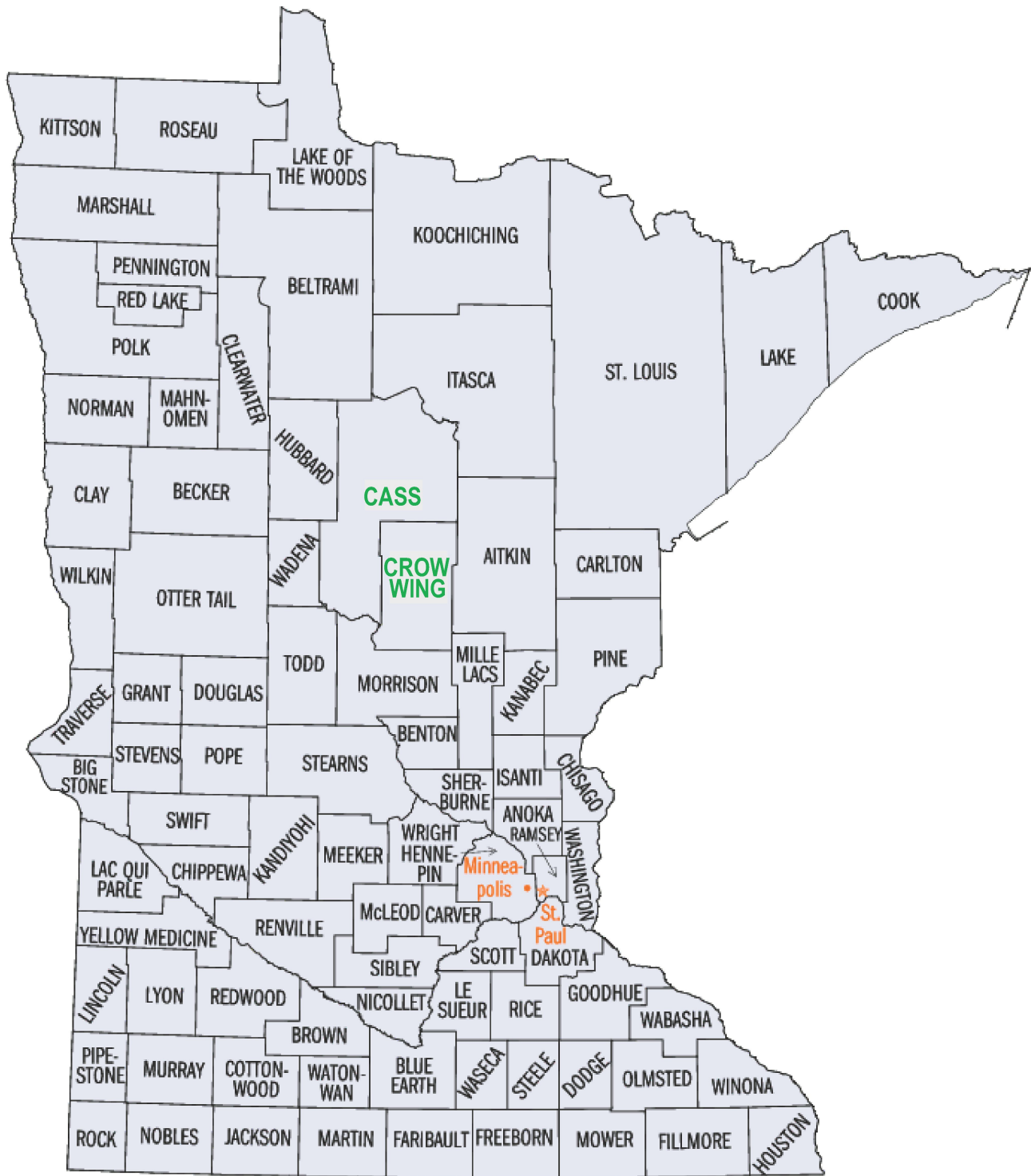
**Protection of Cass and Crow Wing County's critical conservation areas by
addressing storm water runoff, future land use,
and minimizing the impact of transportation
Project Budget**

IV. TOTAL PROJECT REQUEST BUDGET (3 years)

BUDGET ITEM <i>(See list of Eligible & Non-Eligible Costs, p. 13)</i>	AMOUNT
Contracts: <i>Future Land Use Map Planning consultant \$205,000; Environmental and Transportation Planning consultant \$175,000; Stormwater and Waste water consultant \$215,000</i>	\$ 595,000
TOTAL PROJECT BUDGET REQUEST TO LCCMR	\$ 595,000

V. OTHER FUNDS

SOURCE OF FUNDS	AMOUNT	Status
Other Non-State \$ Being Applied to Project During Project Period: <i>Cash contributions from Crow Wing County \$65,000; Cass County \$5,000; Federal transportation appropriation \$300,000</i>	\$ 370,000	<i>pending</i>
In-kind Services During Project Period: Staff support for plan development, research, meetings, comment processing. Participants in the process from the community organizations, government, citizens, business. Estimate 3140 hours at \$35/hour	\$ 110,000	



Crow Wing and Cass County Micropolitan Resource Planning

Organization Description:

The Minnesota State Legislature, through the Regional Development Act of 1969 established Regional Development Commissions throughout Minnesota. Research found that issues of growth and development transcended boundary lines of local government and that common solutions to local issues could be found by pooling resources through intergovernmental cooperation. In this spirit the Region Five Development Commission (R5DC) was formed in 1973 by local units of government to assist Cass, Crow Wing, Morrison, Todd and Wadena counties.

The mission of Region Five Development Commission is to provide high quality, professional planning and development services through collaboration, assistance, and coordination with local units of government, organizations, and citizens. Our principal objective is to enhance the vitality and quality of life in Cass, Crow Wing, Morrison, Todd, and Wadena Counties.

Region Five Development Commission provides high quality professional planning, development assistance, and other services through collaboration and coordination with local units of government, organizations and citizens.

Since its creation the R5DC has been the Area Agency for Aging, the Area Agency for Arts, and provided GIS and Housing services. Currently the R5DC departments include Community and Economic Development, Transportation, Grant/Loan/Contract Administration and special projects. R5DC publishes several annual reports utilized by local units of government including a regional township newsletter to coordinate regional township communication and is geared to solving problems that arise on the township level.

Region Five Development Commission is funded by local levy dollars, contracts of technical assistance agreements, federal and state grants, and Grant/Loan administration fees.

Project Manager Qualifications:

Cheryal Lee Hills, Executive Director for Region 5 will provide the project management. Cheryal provides program development, program implementation, organization planning, financial planning and oversight, communication to Commission and the five counties served by Region Five and staff supervision.