

**Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund  
2011-2012 Request for Proposals (RFP)**

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**LCCMR ID: 113-D**

**Project Title:** Expanded Conservation Easement for Kingswood Camp in Minnetrista

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**Category:** D. Land Acquisition for Habitat and Recreation

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**Total Project Budget:** \$ \$172,500

**Proposed Project Time Period for the Funding Requested:** 2 yrs, July 2011 - June 2013

**Other Non-State Funds:** \$ 50,000

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**Summary:**

This 41.2 acre easement expands an existing 65 acre permanent easement protecting identified ecologically significant natural areas and a glacial esker from further fragmentation and the threat of future development.

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**Sponsoring Organization:** Hennepin County

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Minneapolis MN 55401

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**Web Address:** www.hennepin.us

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**Location**

**Region:** Metro

**Ecological Section:** Minnesota and NE Iowa Morainal (222M)

**County Name:** Hennepin

**City / Township:** Minnetrista

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_____ Funding Priorities	_____ Multiple Benefits	_____ Outcomes	_____ Knowledge Base
_____ Extent of Impact	_____ Innovation	_____ Scientific/Tech Basis	_____ Urgency
_____ Capacity Readiness	_____ Leverage	_____ Employment	_____ TOTAL _____%

# 2011-2012 MAIN PROPOSAL

## PROJECT TITLE: Expanded Conservation Easement on Kingswood Camp in Minnetrista

### I. PROJECT STATEMENT

This 41.2 acre permanent conservation easement will expand an existing 65 acre conservation easement to further protect a rare glacial esker and ecologically significant natural areas from further fragmentation by future development in western Hennepin County. With the addition of this easement all ecologically significant lands associated with the Kingswood Camp would be protected. The only parts of the camp that would not fall under permanent protection are the areas where buildings exist and/or are planned in the future along with a campground area. This parcel includes a remnant Maple basswood forest (identified in the DNR County Biological Survey as significant), approximately 25 acres of restored tall grass prairie and a tamarack bog that have all been identified as critical habitat with the inclusion of endangered rare features. This natural area has also been identified in the Hennepin County natural resources inventories, assessments and corridors as one of the top four priority areas in the county in need of protection. The overall goal of this permanent conservation easement is to ensure that no further fragmentation would occur in this 'Big Woods Remnant' and identified corridor due to impending development. This easement would include the protection of a very unique geological feature in the glacial esker, as well as, the protection of a tamarack bog located in its entirety on this site and inhabited by some unique vegetative species. This parcel of land currently provides the camp and its visitors a unique educational opportunity to learn about the function and importance of three of the historic native ecosystems for this area that include the big woods, bogs and prairies. These goals will be achieved by permanently protecting this ecologically unique 41.2 acre site with a permanent conservation easement. Kingswood Camp is not interested in a fee title acquisition as they would like to continue to use this area as an educational tool. This property is in most cases open to certain groups outside of the Methodist Church with arrangements for environmental purposes.

### II. DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT ACTIVITIES

#### **Activity 1: Purchase of Permanent Conservation Easement    Budget: \$ 172,500.00**

This activity establishes a permanent conservation easement that will augment the current permanent easement of the 65 acres of the adjacent property (See attached graphic). The existing protected area is primarily old growth Maple basswood forest resident on a unique glacial esker that includes a rich fen and adjacent to Little Long Lake. Little Long Lake is considered one of the crown jewels of Western Hennepin County for its exceptional water quality and natural shorelines and features. This proposed expansion of 41.2 acres of conservation easement will insure the protection of a good quality Maple basswood forest remnant, an existing tall grass prairie, a unique tamarack bog and a glacial esker. With these protections in place it will insure the continuation and propagation of vegetative and wildlife species diversity in a quickly developing metro area. This area falls within an identified critical habitat corridor which provides a unique, and accessible, educational opportunity for the metro population. Fee title would remain with the Kingswood Camp. The permanent conservation easement would be held by the Minnesota Land Trust. The Dept. of Natural Resources (DNR) holds the permanent easement on the adjacent 65 acres that was funded through bonding money and Environmental Trust Fund money. Currently the DNR is unable to accept any new easements.

The preliminary estimated value of the permanent conservation easement for this 41.2 acre site according to an appraiser under contract with the Hennepin County Dept. of Environmental

Services (HCDES) is approximately \$250,000. Kingswood Camp has committed to a \$50,000 match in lieu of easement value and Hennepin County is committing \$27,500 cash match towards the purchase value of this permanent conservation easement. The remainder of \$172,500 is being requested from the Environmental Trust Fund with this application. In addition to the cash match Hennepin County will be providing the approximate \$7,500 cost of funding required for appraising the value of the property and all costs associated with the recording of the permanent conservation easement and payment of \$15,000 for the stewardship fund required by the Minnesota Land Trust for holding the easement and the provision of long term monitoring and management of the said easement. HCDES will be prepare a base line report as well as a long term management plan as an in-kind service that will include prairie management, forest management and protection measures of water quality and quantity for the tamarack bog.

Outcome	Completion Date
1. Permanent conservation easement recorded and established.	6/30/2013

### III. PROJECT STRATEGY

#### A. Project Team/Partners

- Hennepin County Dept. Environmental Services (HCDES):** Staff will facilitate the appraisal and all activities for recording the easement, prepare a base line report, a management plan, and provide technical assistance in the management of this easement. HCDES will also be contributing \$50,000 in matching funds that include \$7500 for appraisal, survey and other fees associated with the recording of the easement, \$15,000 for stewardship funds, and a cash match of \$27,500 towards the purchase of the conservation easement.
- United States Fish and Wildlife Service:** Support this project with continued technical assistance in the propagation of the wetland and tall grass prairie on the site. The tall grass prairie portion of this project was restored five years ago through a cooperative agreement between USFWS, HCDES and Kingswood Camp.
- Kingswood Camp:** The camp will donate \$50,000 towards the purchase value of the conservation easement and will provide support and assistance in the management of the property as well as facilitation of the educational component for the site.
- City of Minnetrista:** Supports the enrollment of this property in a permanent conservation easement as part of their adopted Parks, Trails and Open Space Plan with a resolution from the City Council.
- Minnesota Land Trust:** Will hold the conservation easement and provide monitoring of the site.

#### B. Timeline Requirements

The final appraisal will be completed within the first six months of approval and funding of this project. The easement will be recorded within the 24 month time period.

#### C. Long-Term Strategy and Future Funding Needs

Funding will be provided for the management, protection and enhancement of the Maple basswood forest, tall grass prairie and the wetland/bog located on this property. The tall grass prairie established on approx. 25 acres of this site was completed through the HCDES Natural Resources for Critical Habitat (NRICH) program in cooperation with the US Fish and Wildlife Service. The forested areas of this proposed easement would be enhanced where needed by reforestation efforts which will be funded through local government and future grant opportunities. Invasive species will be monitored and controlled through cooperative efforts of Kingswood Camp, HCDES and various volunteer programs.

## 2011-2012 Detailed Project Budget

### IV. TOTAL TRUST FUND REQUEST BUDGET 2 years

BUDGET ITEM	AMOUNT
<b>Acquisition (Fee Title or Permanent Easements):</b> Permanent (41.2 acre) conservation easement to be held and monitored by the Minnesota Land Trust. Appraisals, survey, baseline report, management plan, stewardship funds and all other necessary recording fees will be paid for by Hennepin County. (See below)	\$ 172,500
<b>TOTAL ENVIRONMENT &amp; NATURAL RESOURCES TRUST FUND \$ REQUEST</b>	<b>\$ 172,500</b>

### V. OTHER FUNDS

SOURCE OF FUNDS	AMOUNT	Status
<b>Other Non-State \$ Being Applied to Project During Project Period:</b> Hennepin County will be providing matching funds of \$50,000.00 that includes; \$7,500 for an appraisal, survey and all associated costs incurred to record a permanent conservation easement, \$15,000 stewardship funding to the Minnesota Land Trust for monitoring and management of the easement; and a cash match of \$27,500 towards purchase of the permanent conservation easement at Kingswood Camp. The estimated value of property per preliminary appraisal for the 41.2 acre proposed easement area was approximately \$500,000.00 with a conservation easement value of approximately \$250,000.00 as determined by an appraiser under contract with Hennepin County Dept. of Environmental Services (HCDES). Kingswood Camp is willing to gift \$50,000.00 of the easement value towards the purchase of this permanent conservation easement.	\$ 100,000	<i>Secured</i>
<b>In-kind Services During Project Period:</b> HCDES (\$5,000 for base line report and management plan); Kingswood Staff (\$2,500 for natural resources management);	\$ 7,500	Secured
<b>Funding History:</b> U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for establishment of prairie, \$5,000 ; Hennepin County Natural Resources for Critical Habitat (NRICH) Program towards prairie establishment, \$10,000; adjacent conservation easement of 65 acres appraised at \$990,000.00 was sold at bargain sale of \$500,000.00 by Kingswood Camp. \$376,000.00 of bonding money and \$124,000.000 of Environmental Trust Fund money were used for purchase of permanent conservation easement held by the MN Dept. of Natural Resources. Kingswood Camp in this sale gifted \$490,000.00 in value.	\$ 505,000	Spent

## 2011-2012 Acquisition List for Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund Proposal

**Project Title:** Expanded Conservation Easement for Kingswood Camp in Minnetrista

**Project Manager Name:** David Thill

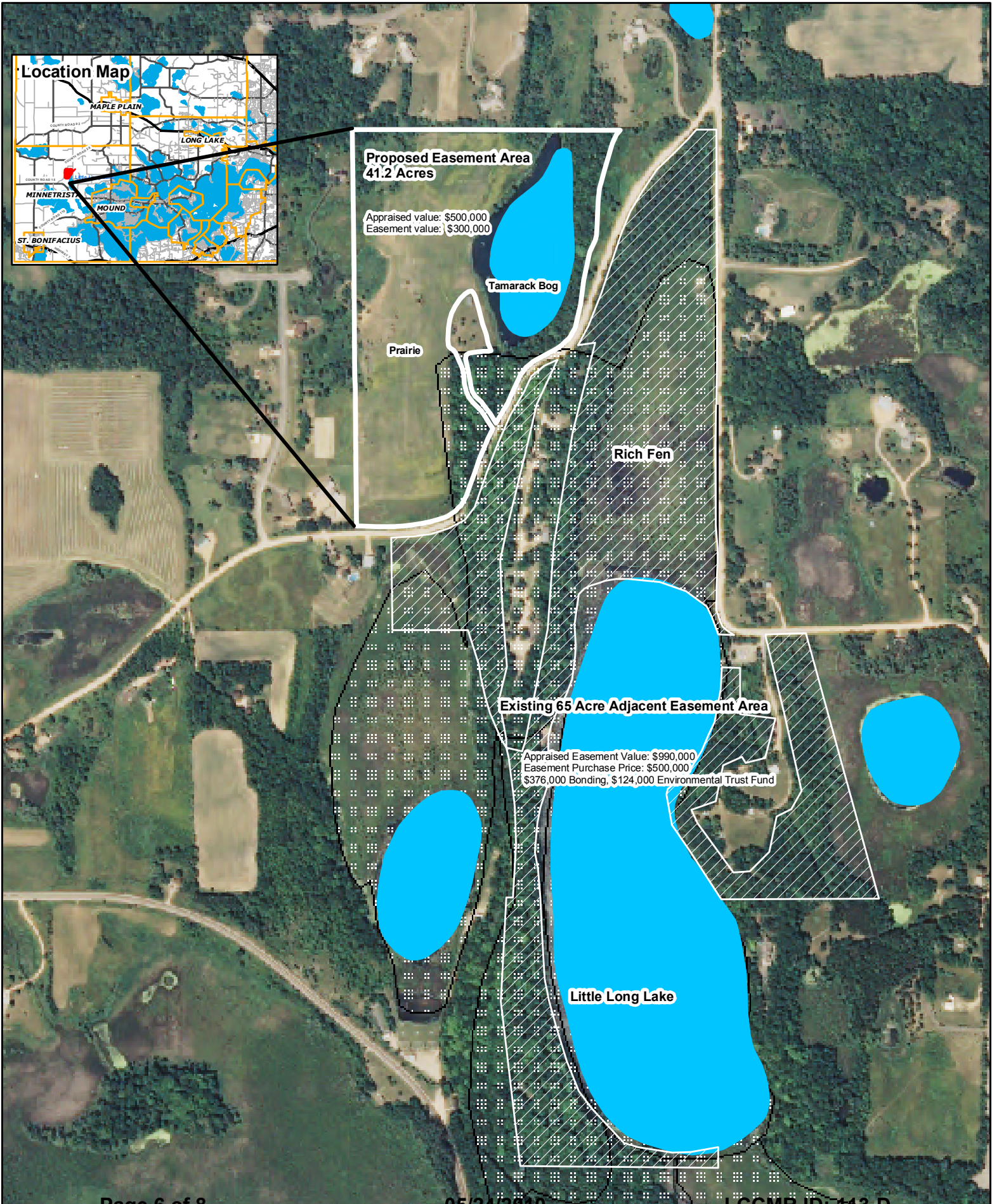
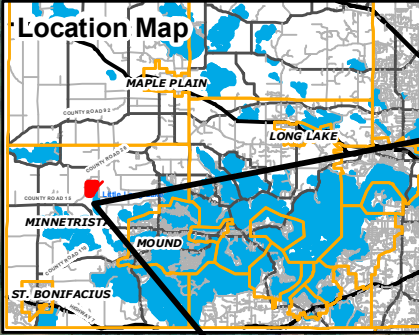
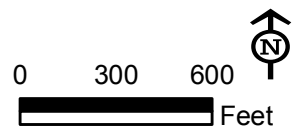
**Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund \$ Request:** \$172,500

**Final Title Holder(s):** Kingswood Camp (MLT & Hennepin County as easement holders)

#	Parcel Name	Acquisition Type (Fee-Title OR Conservation Easement)	County	Estimated # of Acres	Geographical Coordinates (Provide Latitude/Longitude OR UTM-X/UTM-Y)			
					Latitude	Longitude	UTM-X	UTM-Y
1	Kingswood Camp	Conservation Easement	Hennepin	41.2	44deg 57' 29.367" N	93deg 42' 40.877" W		
2								
3								
4								
5								
6								
7								
8								
9								
10								
<b>NOTES:</b>								

# Kingswood Camp Conservation Easement

Adjacent Protected Area    Water  
Proposed Easement Area    County Biological Survey



**Project Manager: David Thill**  
**Senior Environmentalist/Natural Resources Specialist**  
**Hennepin County Department of Environmental Services (HCDES)**

**Mission Statement of HCDES**

To preserve and enhance Hennepin County's environment for future generations through the responsible management of wastes and natural resources and the promotion of environmental stewardship.

**Qualifications as Project Manager**

- 3 years with the Soil Conservation Service
- 7 years with HCDES
- 18 years with the Hennepin Conservation District

Twenty five years experience as a Natural Resource Specialist in Hennepin County. Work experience includes natural resources related project management and implementation. Areas of expertise include ecological inventories and assessments, best management practice design and implementation, remote sensing, and working with agencies, individual landowners and local units of government towards the protection and management of natural resources.

**Conservation Easements**

Reinvest in Minnesota coordinator for Hennepin County. Involved with the recording and implementation of thirty-six permanent conservation easements in Hennepin County. Currently monitoring and managing natural resources on all of these easements.

**Natural Resources Inventory of Hennepin County**

Project manager for the Natural Resources Inventory of Hennepin County utilizing the Minnesota Land Cover Classification Methodology. This project resulted in published Natural Resource Inventory reports for all cities located in Hennepin County.

Developed the natural resources corridors for Hennepin County based on the MLCCS data collected. These corridors have since been adopted by the Dept. of Natural Resources as the official Metro Corridors/Focus Areas for the county.

**Hennepin County Wetland Inventory**

Project manager for the comprehensive wetland inventory of Hennepin County.

**Functional Assessment of Wetlands**

Project manager for the functional assessment of wetlands in Minnehaha Creek Watershed District, the City of Medina and the Mississippi Watershed Management Organization.

