

**Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund  
2012-2013 Request for Proposals (RFP)**

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**Project Title:**

**ENRTF ID: 064-D3**

MeCC VII - 2.6 & 3.7: Dakota County Lakeshore and Riparian Protection

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**Topic Area:** D. Land Acquisition & Restoration

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**Total Project Budget:** \$ 850,000

**Proposed Project Time Period for the Funding Requested:** 3 yrs, July 2013 - June 2016

**Other Non-State Funds:** \$ 0

**Summary:**

This project will acquire 194 acres of conservation easements along rivers, streams and undeveloped lakeshore; develop Natural Resource Management Plans for 74 acres and restore/enhance 50 acres.

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**Location**

**Region:** Metro

**County Name:** Dakota

**City / Township:** multiple

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<input type="checkbox"/> Funding Priorities	<input type="checkbox"/> Multiple Benefits	<input type="checkbox"/> Outcomes	<input type="checkbox"/> Knowledge Base
<input type="checkbox"/> Extent of Impact	<input type="checkbox"/> Innovation	<input type="checkbox"/> Scientific/Tech Basis	<input type="checkbox"/> Urgency
<input type="checkbox"/> Capacity Readiness	<input type="checkbox"/> Leverage	<input type="checkbox"/> Employment	<input type="checkbox"/> TOTAL _____%

# 2012-2013 MAIN PROPOSAL

**PROJECT TITLE:** MeCC7: Dakota County Lakeshore and Riparian Protection

## I. PROJECT STATEMENT

The project will acquire an estimated ten conservation easements, totaling 134 acres from willing landowners, along the Mississippi River; Vermillion River and North, Middle and South Creek, South Branch and their tributaries; the Cannon River and its primary tributaries within the County (Dutch, Mud, Chub, Darden and Pine Creeks, and Trout Brook); and acquire a 60-acre easement along Marcott Lakes in Inver Grove Heights. Natural Resource Management Plans will be completed on 74 acres and 50 acres of protected property will be restored/enhanced.

## II. DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT ACTIVITIES

**Activity 1:** Acquisition of Conservation Easements

**Budget:** \$758,000

The completed LCCMR-funded Vermillion River Corridor Plan provides the basis for riparian land protection. The plan integrates and prioritizes the combined protection and improvement of water quality, wildlife habitat and appropriate outdoor recreational opportunities. A system of established criteria is used to evaluate and rank projects. The easements do not require public access, but projects including public access receive higher scores.

Outcome	Completion Date
1. Permanent protection of estimated 11 properties totaling an estimated 194 acres of high priority natural resource lands	June 30, 2015

**Activity 2:** Natural Resource management Plans and Restoration

**Budget:** \$92,000

All easements require a Natural Resource Management Plan (NRMP) jointly developed by the County and the landowner. The NRMP describes the current and preferred habitat and other conditions with recommendations on how to achieve mutual goals. A detailed, three-year work plan, describing priority activities and responsibilities, is also completed as a core element of the NRMP. Due to the two-year time constraint, an estimated 50 percent of the riparian easements will have final NRMPs completed by June 30, 2014, with the remaining 50 percent having preliminary NRMPs. Easement deed language requires completion of the final NRMP within six months of closing. The timing and features of the acquisition will determine if a final NRMP can be completed. The application and selection process will also include projects that focus specifically on restoration of previously protected land.

Outcome	Completion Date
1. Final Natural Resource Management Plans and work plans for 60 acres of new easement acquisitions. Preliminary Natural Resource Management Plans for 74 acres for new easement acquisitions.	June 30, 2015
2. Restoration and Enhancement of 50 acres of previously protected areas or early easement acquisitions.	June 30, 2016

### **III. PROJECT STRATEGY**

#### **A. Project Team/Partners**

This proposal is part of the Metro Conservation Corridor Partnership proposal. Dakota County has used a very collaborative approach to its land conservation efforts over the past eight years. All land acquisition has been done on the basis of willing sellers- most often on a bargain sale basis. The Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Organization have contributed funds or in-kind services on past and current projects and are likely to continue those productive partnerships during this project phase. All eleven townships have been very supportive of previous efforts. The Soil and Water Conservation District and the Friends of the Mississippi River have been critical partners in providing outreach, technical assistance and easement monitoring services. The County has worked very cooperatively with the DNR on a number of land conservation projects from contributing funds for state acquisitions and transferring County lands for a new WMA to jointly managing the Vermillion Highlands complex. The Natural Resource Conservation Service has been a critical partner in facilitating the use of over \$10M of federal Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program (FRPP) funds to the County for acquiring permanent easements along waterways each year since 2003. Budgeted 2012 FRPP funds are available for conservation corridor projects.

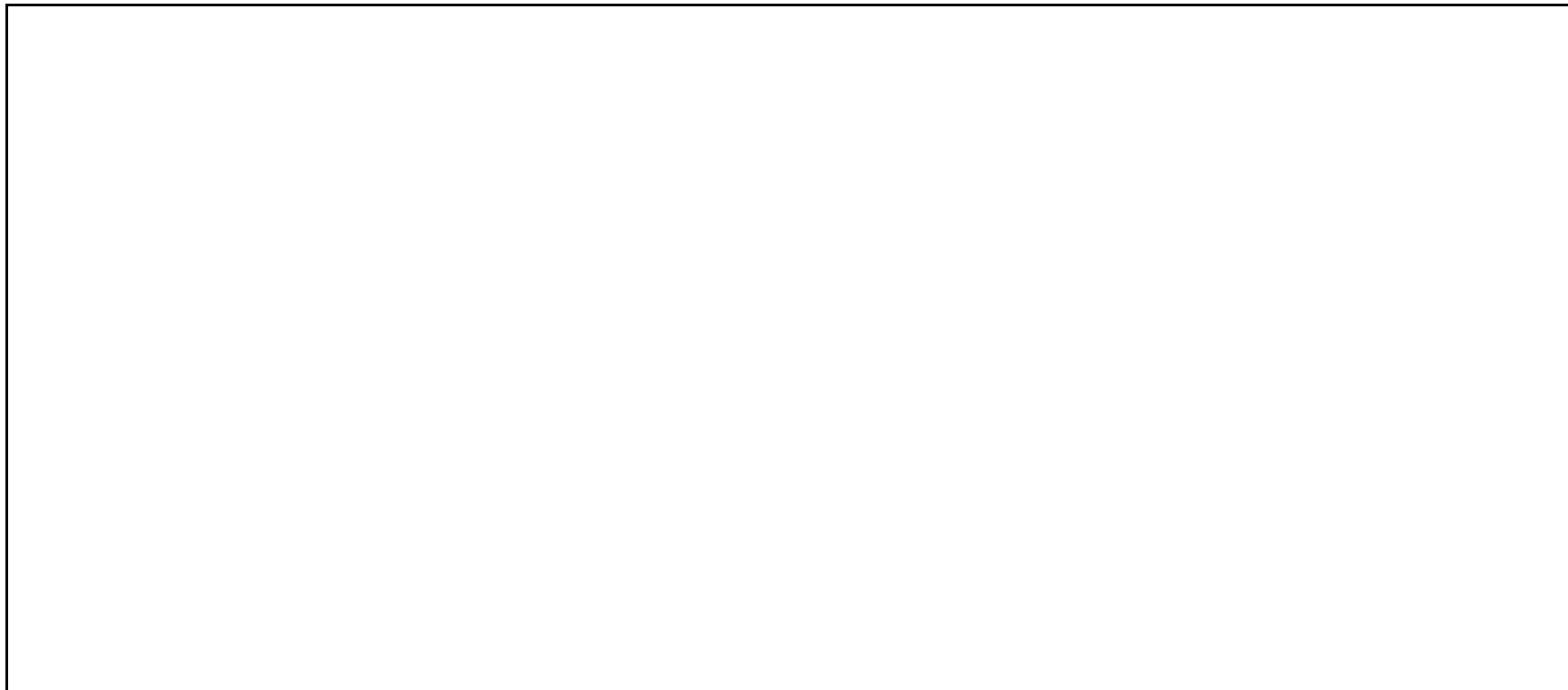
#### **B. Timeline Requirements**

With the Vermillion River Corridor Plan already in place, completion of model implementation projects, development of selection criteria and the process for project evaluation and selection, project implementation in the Vermillion River watershed can begin with completing previously selected projects after July 1, 2011. While we anticipate that acquisition funding can be accomplished in two years, the lapse between acquisition and implementing restoration takes longer. As a result, we would request that we have until June 30, 2016 to complete the project.

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

In 2011 the County completed an ambitious, comprehensive, long-term approach to land and water conservation vision and strategic implementation plan. This plan integrates acquisition of private regional park in-holdings; development of a 200-mile multi-purpose greenway system that focuses on recreation, habitat and water quality; and protecting and improving riparian and lakeshore buffers, and priority natural areas and agricultural conservation zones. County staff has estimated an additional 13,000 acres will need to be protected and managed to fully achieve a variety of public benefits at an estimated cost of \$42M.

**2012-2013 Proposed Acquisition List**



**Project Title:** MeCC7 Dakota County lakeshore and Riparian Protection

**Project Manager Name:** Alan Singer

**Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund \$ Request:** \$850,000

#	Parcel Name	Acquisition Type (Fee Title or Conservation Easement)	County	Ecological Significance	Proposed # of Acres	Proposed # of Shoreline Miles (if applicable)	Proposed Fee Title or Easement Holder (if applicable)
1	Grannis, Grannis, et.al.	Conservation Easement	Dakota	Undeveloped lakeshore of high quality lake	60	.74 mi.	Dakota County
3	Vermillion River Headwaters	Conservation Easement	Dakota	State designated trout stream	30	1.3 mi.	Dakota County
4	South, Middle, and North Vermillion River South	Conservation Easement	Dakota	riparian habitat	20	1.1 mi.	Dakota County
5		Conservation Easement	Dakota	State designated trout stream	20	1.1 mi.	Dakota County
6	Eastern Main Stem of the Chub, Dutch, and Mud Creeks	Conservation Easement	Dakota	riparian habitat	10	.57 mi	Dakota County
7		Conservation Easement	Dakota	riparian habitat	20	1.1 mi.	Dakota County
8	Cannon River	Conservation Easement	Dakota	state scenic river	20	1.1 mi.	Dakota County
9	Pine and Darden Creeks	Conservation Easement	Dakota	riparian habitat	14	.77 mi	Dakota County
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**NOTES:**

## 2012-2013 Detailed Project Budget

### IV. TOTAL ENRTF REQUEST BUDGET 3 years

<u>BUDGET ITEM</u>	<u>AMOUNT</u>
<b>Contracts:</b> A. Landowner Outreach: 250 hours @ \$65 per hour over two-year period with Lee Markell B. Developing and Implementing Natural Resource Management Plans: 600 hours @ \$70 per hour over three years with Friends of the Mississippi River and Dakota County SWCD	\$ 58,250
<b>Equipment/Tools/Supplies:</b> Native grass and forb seeds, native trees and shrubs, and equipment use for installation	\$ 50,000
<b>Acquisition (Fee Title or Permanent Easements):</b> 194 acres of easement held by Dakota County	\$ 741,750
<b>TOTAL ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES TRUST FUND \$ REQUEST =</b>	<b>\$ 850,000</b>


### V. OTHER FUNDS

<u>SOURCE OF FUNDS</u>	<u>AMOUNT</u>	<u>Status</u>
<b>Other Non-State \$ Being Applied to Project During Project Period:</b> \$700,000 from Dakota County, \$60,000 from Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Organization \$50,000 from NRCS through FRPP, and \$100,000 in landowner donation	\$ 910,000	<i>Cash is secured. Landowner donation is pending.</i>
<b>Other State \$ Being Applied to Project During Project Period:</b> Future Outdoor Heritage Funds may be requested for future phases of the Marcott Lakes project	\$2,000,000	<i>Uncertain</i>
<b>In-kind Services During Project Period:</b> Dakota County staff for coordinating projects, GIS, survey, environmental assessments, legal, and other necessary documentation.	\$ 50,000	Secured
<b>Remaining \$ from Current ENRTF Appropriation (if applicable):</b> \$1035,000 in FY11 for Dakota County Riparian and Lakeshore Protection as part of the MECC 6 project	\$1,035,000	<i>Unspent and Not Legally Obligated</i>
<b>Funding History:</b> \$293,000 in 1998 and 2001 for Phase I and Phase II of Farmland and Natural Areas Program Plan, \$549,965 in 2008 for Vermillion River Corridor Plan and Protection, \$1035,000 in 2011 for Dakota County Riparian and Lakeshore Protection as part of the MECC 6 project	\$ 842,965	Spent



**2012-2013 LCCMR Proposal**  
**MeCC 7: Dakota County Riparian and Lakeshore Protection**  
**Acquisition Location Map**

**Legend**

-  Representative Riparian Project Locations
-  Tributary Corridors
-  Conservation Corridors
-  Aquatic Corridors
-  Cannon River
-  Additional Cannon River Tributary Creeks





