

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

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**Project Title:**

**ENRTF ID: 100-E2**

A Strategy Protecting Land for Waters Sake

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**Topic Area:** E2. NR Info Collection/Analysis

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**Total Project Budget:** \$ 440,000

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

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

**Summary:**

Proposal to develop a conservation blueprint for the Mississippi headwaters and headwater lakes area. Using a watershed approach the plan will develop conservation plans for the seven major watersheds.

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**Name:** Todd Holman

**Sponsoring Organization:** The Nature Conservancy

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**Location**

**Region:** NW, NE, Central

**County Name:** Aitkin, Beltrami, Cass, Clearwater, Crow Wing, Hubbard, Itasca, Morrison

**City / Township:**

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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 <input type="checkbox"/> %



# Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund (ENRTF) 2012-2013 Main Proposal

**PROJECT TITLE: *Strategy to Protect Land for Waters Sake: A Freshwater Conservation Blueprint for the Headwaters of the Mississippi River Watersheds***

## **I. PROJECT STATEMENT**

The Mississippi Headwaters and headwater lakes area as defined by the northern 8-counties and first 400-miles of the river's main-stem represent some of the most functional and diverse healthy watersheds in Minnesota. These seven major watersheds are home to some of our state's most outstanding freshwater ecological resources and recreational opportunities, while functioning to provide drinking water resources to greater than 1.7 -million Minnesotans. This region also provides a sound base for a robust local and regional economy. In addition to the source water function, this Headwaters region provides ground water recharge for more than 29 rural communities within the upper portion of the Central Province Ground Water Area 4 as defined by MDNR. These water resources are threatened by the impacts of population growth and intensification of land use practices as forecast by 2010 census data. The healthy watersheds approach will guide the development of a conservation blueprint that will identify strategies to protect and enhance those portions of the Mississippi Headwaters major watersheds that are critical to maintain the functions that Minnesotans depend on while looking for ways to minimize potential negative trends.

The LCCMR Six-Year Strategic Plan identifies "*conserve land and water (surface and ground) resources that are important for overall ecosystem integrity.*" This conservation blueprint will build on the growing alignment of non-profit organizations, local government, state and federal partners, including TNC's current work with EPA's Healthy Watersheds Initiative. It is intended that this blueprint will build the local capacity to fully implement the results of the Clean Water Legacy Act's major watershed restoration and protection projects for these major watersheds. The established North Central Conservation Roundtable will convene partners to develop a unified conservation vision that will guide development of a conservation blueprint and implementation strategy for the Headwaters area using a watershed-based approach. The collaborative will assemble scientific expertise to assess existing data sets within the seven major watershed boundaries and develop strategic targeted conservation priorities that, upon implementation, would have measurable water quality outputs (reduced erosion, phosphorus, flow alterations) within each of the major watersheds. An oversight committee of the collaborative will develop GIS overlays to guide partners in the development of conservation strategies and local implementation. This integration of existing plans and data has not been done in this region and is desperately needed in order to implement efficient conservation. As a collaborative we will build on existing watershed projects underway through agency priorities and Legacy funding to help focus these efforts at the local level and assist with transition of state conservation efforts with local water planning objectives. Results from this project will position the collaborative and local government partners to strategically work together on priorities and to utilize future state funding.

## **II. DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT ACTIVITIES**

**Activity 1:** Project development/data/GIS

**Budget:** \$295,000

TNC will convene the collaborative, including outreach to local, state and federal partners, to develop a healthy watershed-by-watershed blueprint that rolls up to a Headwater's regional implementation plan.

This blueprint will be informed by science staff working to assemble data sets within these watersheds; making targeted implementation recommendations that build on existing localized protection work while identifying means to bring those localized efforts to watershed scale. The collaborative will oversee, via subcommittee, the GIS contract or member work that will both facilitate access to this data and project information while guiding the watershed framework that links to the blueprint. The GIS work will coordinate with local county Water Plans/GIS and agency staff.

Outcome	Completion Date
1. Convening of the collaborative: partner prioritization assemblage	7/2013 to 6/2016
2. Data gathering, analysis: implementation strategies	6/30/2015
3. GIS development: land use analysis (contract or collaborative member)	6/30/2014
4. General project administration, community outreach	7/2013 to 6/2016

**Activity 2:** Develop the Plan and tools

**Budget:** \$145,000

Consultant or collaborative member will develop a Mississippi Headwaters conservation blueprint that details watershed priorities and implementation strategies for the seven major watersheds.

Outcome	Completion Date
1. Develop/produce Mississippi Headwaters Plan document	6/30/2016
2. Format development and accessible link to interactive websites	6/30/2016
3. Localized regional outreach materials	6/30/2016

### III. PROJECT STRATEGY

#### A. Project Team/Partners

The collaborative is represented by The Nature Conservancy, Leach Lake Area Watershed Foundation, Trust for Public Land, Minnesota Land Trust, The Conservation Fund, Envision MN, Ducks Unlimited, Trout Unlimited, Chippewa Natl. Forest, Anglers for Habitat, local units of government, MDNR and other agency partners. TNC will function as the convening lead partner in this proposal. The collaborative will contribute significant in-kind hours by participating in monthly meetings, project oversight and development of implementation strategies.

#### B. Timeline Requirements

Twelve to twenty-four months would include developing the North Central Conservation Round Table vision and oversight committee. The committee would guide the science component of data assemblage and development of strategic conservation priorities for all seven sub-watersheds. Running parallel to data assemblage would be the GIS component of the project. In addition to producing interactive mapping representations for the plan, this contract will assess land conversion vulnerability, runoff coefficient changes in flow and content, land use analysis scenarios and other modeling that inform implementation strategies for the Mississippi Headwaters upper 400-miles. The end product would include GIS products that link to and are usable by state and federal agencies and local units of government. The third year would include development of sub-watershed plans, blueprint narratives that include specific strategies, fund sourcing recommendations and outreach products.

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

This project's success can be replicated in other targeted resource areas of the state. Similar healthy watersheds-based proposals in those regions are expected to be forthcoming. This may also lead to a statewide healthy waters plan analogous to the very recent MN Prairie Plan model.

## 2012-2013 Detailed Project Budget

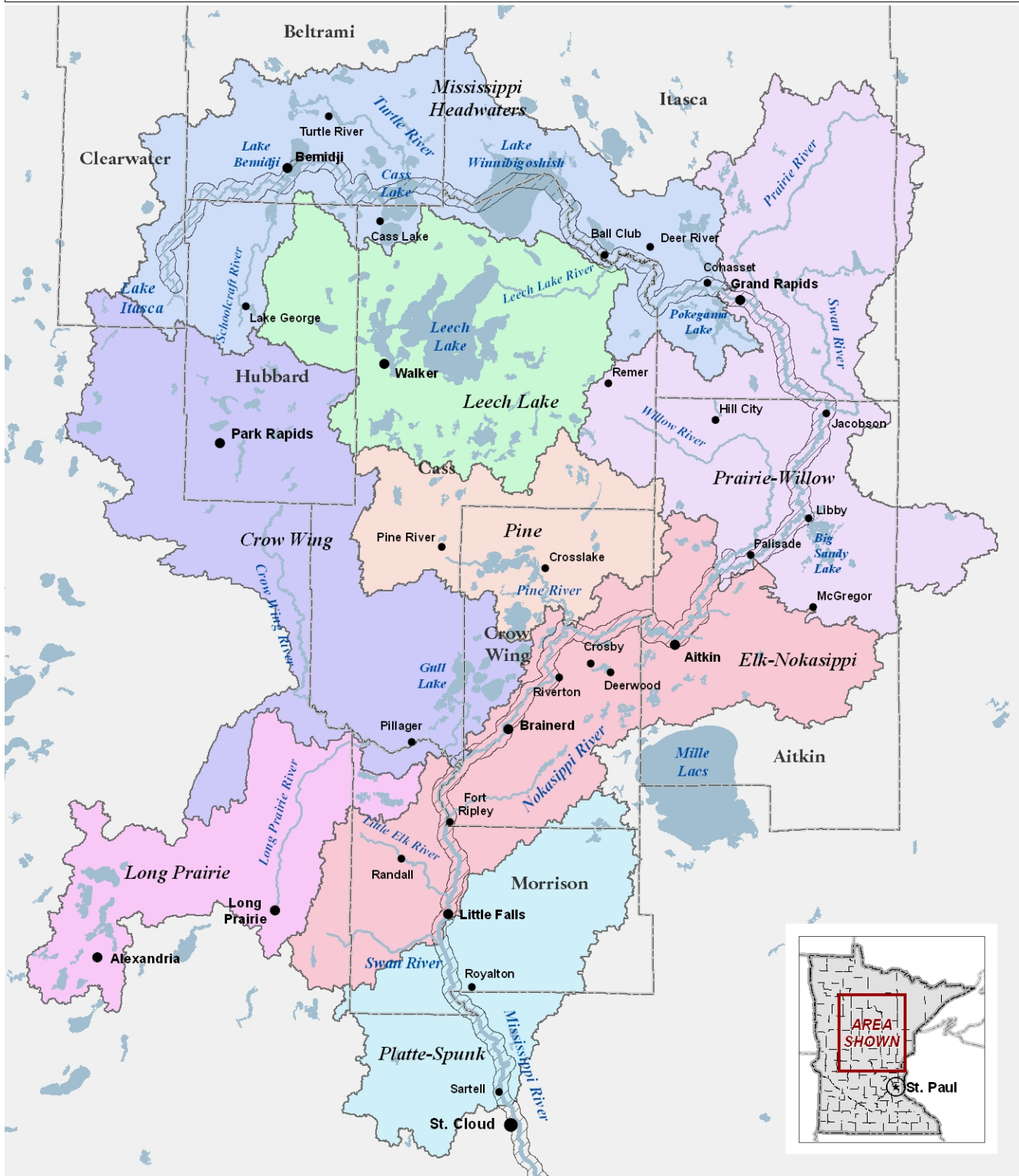
### IV. TOTAL ENRTF REQUEST BUDGET 3-years

<u>BUDGET ITEM</u>	<u>AMOUNT</u>
<b>Personnel:</b>	
Project Manager: TNC (30% empl. *1 position (70% salary, 30% benefits) *3-yrs. [Project oversight, & reporting, budgeting & contract mgmt., report cards & mgmt., recommendations, communication and overall administration. Convening partners and local outreach.	\$78,207
Science Lead: TNC (20% empl. *1 position (70% salary, 33% benefits) *2-yrs. [Convening partners to collect, assemble and interpret all available science data, work under direction of the NCCR committee to develop priorities and strategies per sub-watershed (water quality and flow and climate focus), review blueprint development.]	\$29,308
Program Intern: TNC (13%FTE empl. 1 part-time seasonal position (89% salary, 33% benefits)*3-yrs. [Annual report development and website link, other projects as required]	\$10,000
<b>Contracts:</b>	
GIS Services: Work with local college or NCCR capacities to develop multiple data layers using digital elevation modeling, land cover data trend analysis to identify watershed vulnerability to land use conversion, map targeted priority areas for protection based on resource integrity and hydrologic vulnerability to cause degradation.	\$145,000
Plan Writing Consultant: Develop Headwaters Conservation Blueprint that incorporates GIS and science analysis under the direction of the NCCR task force. This blueprint will detail baseline, trend analysis and specific targeted conservation strategies for each of the 7-major watersheds.	\$50,000
Printing Service: Printing of 50 Headwaters Conservation Blueprint docs, 300 brochures for local outreach of plan summary	\$75,000
Contract or NCCR GIS materials that interface with local and state GIS system products	\$20,000
<b>Equipment/Tools/Supplies:</b> Meeting supplies and software for GIS analysis.	\$ 1,000
<b>Travel:</b> In-state travel costs for meals while on travel, personal car mileage reimbursement and lodging while on travel.	\$ 28,680
<b>Additional Budget Items:</b> Printing & copies or meeting & other materials (500), room rental & meeting supplies for partner meetings (800).	\$ 1,300
<b>TOTAL ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES TRUST FUND \$ REQUEST =</b>	<b>\$ 438,495</b>

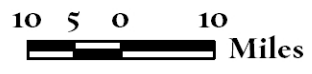
### V. OTHER FUNDS

<u>SOURCE OF FUNDS</u>	<u>AMOUNT</u>	<u>Status</u>
<b>Other Non-State \$ Being Applied to Project During Project Period:</b>	NA	
<b>Other State \$ Being Applied to Project During Project Period:</b>	NA	
<b>In-kind Services During Project Period:</b> The Nature Conservancy (TNC) will also contribute privately-raised funds in the form of unrecovered indirect costs using the Conservancy's federally approved negotiated indirect cost recovery rate of 18% of total project cost totaling \$79,172. Total NGO partner and Local govt. match is \$5,600.00 representing 280 hours of in-kind	\$ 84,872	Pending
<b>Remaining \$ from Current ENRTF Appropriation (if applicable):</b>	NA	
<b>Funding History:</b>	NA	

# Protecting Land for Waters Sake



- Upper Mississippi Subbasins (HUC8)
- Mississippi River - Main Stem
- County



## **Project Manager Qualifications and Organization Description:**

This proposal, "Protection of Land for Water's Sake" will be managed on behalf of The Nature Conservancy by Todd Holman. Todd is a Program Director for The Nature Conservancy for the Prairie Forest Border ecoregion and newly assigned to the Chapter's Freshwater Program. Todd's office is located on the campus of St. John's University, St. Joseph MN. In this role he supports and develops conservation programming in north-central, central and southeast Minnesota areas. Todd has worked for The Nature Conservancy since 2004 and worked prior as a Community Development Director for Baxter, MN. These combined position responsibilities required local, state and federal grant supervision; management and compliance administration. Todd has a bachelor's degree in biology from the University of Minnesota, teaching licensure and graduate work in lake limnology.

### Organization Description

The mission of The Nature Conservancy is to conserve the lands and waters on which all life depends. Using a collaborative, science-based approach, the Conservancy identifies those areas that offer the best chance for large-scale preservation of biodiversity and forges partnerships with businesses, governments, landowners, and residents to develop and implement solutions to environmental threats.

The Nature Conservancy was founded in 1951, and we have protected nearly 120 million acres of land and 5,000 miles of rivers worldwide. We work in all 50 states and in more than 30 countries protecting habitats from grasslands to coral reefs. We address threats to conservation involving climate change, fire, fresh water, forests, invasive species, and marine ecosystems. We use a science-based approach, and we pursue non-confrontational, pragmatic solutions to conservation challenges. We partner with indigenous communities, businesses, governments, multilateral institutions, other non-profits, and individuals.

Since 1958, The Nature Conservancy has protected more than 650,000 acres of Minnesota's forests, prairies, rivers, lakes and wetlands. We currently own and manage 57 preserves across the state, encompassing more than 72,000 acres. We have more than 23,000 members in Minnesota.