

**Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund
2014 Request for Proposals (RFP)**

Project Title:

ENRTF ID: 167-F

Disseminating Sustainable Forest Management Guidelines for Resource Protection

Category: F. Methods to Protect, Restore, and Enhance Land, Water, and Habitat

Total Project Budget: \$ 112,000

Proposed Project Time Period for the Funding Requested: 2 Years, July 2014 - June 2016

Summary:

Publication of revised Forest Management Guidelines in a user-friendly field guide and web application format to increase forest resource protection through enhanced understanding and implementation of sustainable forest management practices.

Name: Robert Slesak

Sponsoring Organization: Minneosta Forest Resources Council

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Location

Region: Statewide

County Name: Statewide

City / Township:

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



PROJECT TITLE: Disseminating Sustainable Forest Management Guidelines for Resource Protection

I. PROJECT STATEMENT

Minnesota is a leader in the development of comprehensive, voluntary forest management guidelines to protect forest resources during timber harvesting and other forest management activities. The guidelines are a set of voluntary practices analogous to best management practices (BMP's) that provide loggers, landowners, and managers a suite of cost-effective options for sustainable forest management. Implementation of guidelines related to soil quality, riparian areas, and wildlife management are critical for healthy forests and the resources derived from them including clean water, wildlife, and timber. The guidelines are also essential to maintenance of forest certification on over 8.4 million acres of forestland in the state, which provides a global competitive advantage to forest industry in Minnesota. Recently, the MN Forest Resources Council (MFRC) completed a comprehensive process updating and revising the forest management guidelines, but funding limitations have prevented the MFRC from publishing the revised guidelines.

Dissemination and understanding of the guidelines are critical to their effective implementation during management activities, and ultimately protection of forest resources. Typically, loggers and managers will reference the guidelines when developing a timber sale, and identify those which need to be implemented to protect resources depending on site conditions. These user groups have indicated that creation of a pocket-sized field manual would greatly facilitate identification of relevant guidelines and improve implementation in operational settings. In addition, guideline content needs to be presented in formats used by the audience of the 21st century to continue forest resource protection into the future. Development of an interactive web application would address this need as it would expand acquisition of guideline content, promote user learning and discovery, and facilitate incorporation of new information as it becomes available. **There is an urgent need to publish the recently revised guidelines in useful formats to protect and conserve forest resources and maintain the global competitiveness of Minnesota's forest industry.**

The overriding goal of this project is to maintain and improve implementation of forest management guidelines to protect important forest resources including water, wildlife, and timber production. We will achieve this goal by increasing the access and usability of revised guideline content by loggers, landowners (private, state, and federal), and managers. Specific outcomes are as follows:

1. Development of a readily accessible and usable field manual containing key guidelines for protection of forest resources during timber harvesting
2. Development of an interactive web-based application that streamlines acquisition of guideline content and expands access to value-added content (e.g., research, monitoring reports, case studies, and user feedback).

II. DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT ACTIVITIES

Activity 1: Field guide development and publication of 10,000 copies

Budget: \$40,000

The field guide will be focused on protecting water, wildlife, soils, and aesthetics during timber harvesting. The MFRC will be initiating a process to identify the format and content of a field guide in 2013 which should be completed prior to awarding of funds. The process will involve input from forest stakeholders (e.g., environmental organizations, forest industry, DNR) and user groups (e.g., loggers and foresters) to identify guidelines critical to the protection of forest resources during timber harvesting. A technical team convened by the MFRC will evaluate input from these user groups and identify appropriate field guide content and format. Funds requested from the LCCMR will be used primarily for graphic design of the field guide, usability testing,



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and printing. Graphic design of the manual will be conducted by a private design firm following a competitive bid process. The draft manual will be tested and reviewed by users, and feedback incorporated as appropriate prior to printing. Field manuals will be contract printed following final approval of design proofs.

Outcome	Completion Date
1. Technical team recommendations completed	July 2014
2. Graphic design completed	October 2014
5. Manual usability testing and incorporation of feedback completed	December 2014
6. Field manuals printed and distributed	April 2015

Activity 2: Develop interactive application for computers and mobile devices

Budget: \$ 72,000

Focus groups will be convened to solicit input from stakeholder and user groups on desired content and format of the online application. Key criteria in the application design will be that it is usable on a range of platforms (e.g., smartphone, field computer, desktop), visually stimulating and interactive, and readily updated and modified. Value-added content (e.g., research, monitoring reports, and field examples) will be identified and developed or acquired for inclusion in the application. Input on the application design outlined above will be compiled and key themes summarized for presentation to a contract design firm which will be chosen using a competitive bid process. Following initial development, the application will be tested by user groups and suggestions for improvement will be incorporated prior to final delivery of the product.

Outcome	Completion Date
1. Focus group recommendations compiled	December 2014
2. Value-added content identified and acquired	December 2014
3. Content, features, and delivery styles of web content finalized	February 2015
4. Initial development of web application completed	December 2015
5. Beta testing for usability completed	February 2016
6. Final product delivery and unveiling	June 2016

III. PROJECT STRATEGY

A. Project Team/Partners

The project will be managed by Dr. Robert Slesak, and all proposed work associated with technical content will be conducted by MFRC staff in cooperation with MFRC members, the DNR, the MN forest Resources Partnership, and the US Forest Service. Mr. David Chura, Executive Director of the Minnesota Logger Education Program, will conduct work associated with solicitation of stakeholder input, identification and acquisition of value-added content, and usability testing for each of the activities. Contract work associated with design and printing will be awarded with a competitive bid process.

B. Timeline Requirements

The proposed project duration is 2 years starting in July 2014. The timeframe assumes that field guide content and structure will be finalized by the MFRC and stakeholder groups prior to awarding of funds.

C. Long-Term Strategy and Future Funding Needs

The proposed project is part of a strategy to expand awareness and understanding of the revised guidelines while reducing future publication costs. We expect that the proposed work will result in significant increases in effective guideline implementation, helping to maintain healthy forests across the state and into the foreseeable future. We do not anticipate future funding requests for this project.

2014 Detailed Project Budget

Disseminating Sustainable Forest Management Guidelines for Resource Protection

Project team: Dr. Robert Slesak, MN Forest Resources Council; Mr. David Chura, Executive Director Minnesota Logger Education Program

IV. TOTAL ENRTF REQUEST BUDGET (2 years)

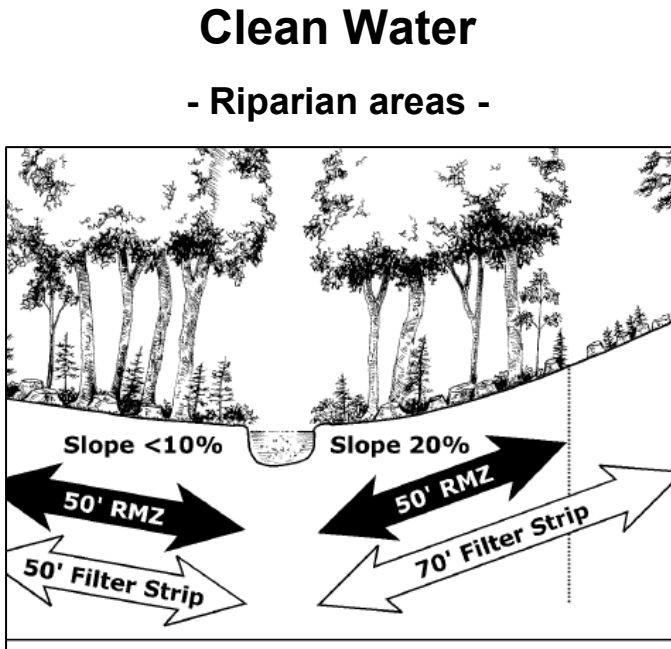
BUDGET ITEM <i>(See list of Eligible and Non-Eligible Costs, p. 11)</i>	AMOUNT
Contracts: MN Logger Education Program (administered by David Chura). Chura has extensive experience in the design and delivery of classroom and online training, focus group development, and survey methods. - 9,000 to develop, conduct, and compile user input from 4-5 focus groups to identify user-friendly content and layout - \$4000 to identify and secure value-added content in Activity 2 - \$2000 to conduct 2 usability sessions of draft products and compile feedback (1 for each activity)	\$ 15,000
Contract with graphic design firm to conduct field manual design and layout. Cost estimate assumes 100 pages of content, 2 hrs. per page for design, and \$75 hr. Contract will be awarded with a competitive bid process.	\$ 15,000
Contract with printing firm for printing of 10,000 copies of the field manual on glossy, laminated paper from a certified source. The field guide will be designed to be durable and fit easily in a shirt or pant pocket. Cost estimate assumes \$2 per book. Contract will be awarded with a competitive bid process.	\$ 20,000
Contract with web development firm for the design and publication of an interactive web-based application. Cost estimate assumes 900 hrs to complete the work with an hourly rate of \$75. Completion time estimate based on similar web design efforts at DNR. Contract will be awarded with a competitive bid process.	\$ 60,000
Travel: Funds will be used to reimburse cooperators assisting with technical aspects of guideline content and formatting for mileage (80%) and other reimbursable travel expenses per the Commissioners plan (e.g., meals, parking; 20%)	\$ 2,000
TOTAL ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES TRUST FUND \$ REQUEST =	\$ 112,000

V. OTHER FUNDS

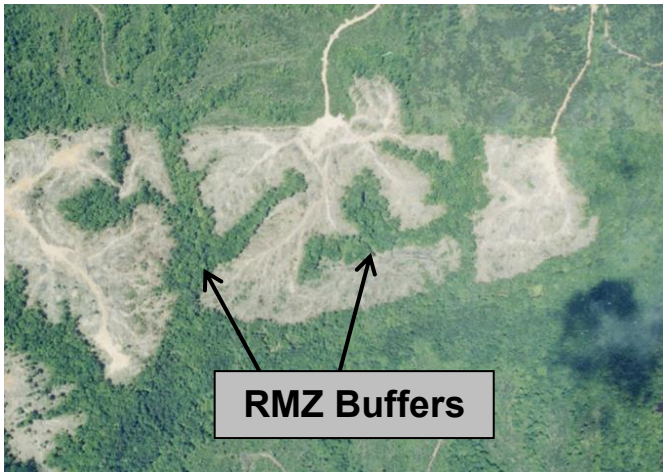
SOURCE OF FUNDS	AMOUNT	Status
In-kind Services During Project Period: In kind salaries (0.2 FTE each year of the project) from Rob Slesak and Rachael Nicoll (MFRC staff). Rob will be responsible for managing all aspects of the proposed work, and Rachael will conduct technical aspects related to coordination of stakeholders, evaluation, and contract management.	\$ 28,500	Secured
Funding History: Approximate amount of general funds used to develop and publish previous versions of the guidelines.	\$ 900,000	

Examples of Forest Management Guideline Application and Resource Protection

Guidelines



Application



Protection



Wildlife Habitat - Tree Retention -

Management or Sale Area Size	Approx. number of leaf trees per acre	Approx. spacing (in feet) if evenly distributed	Forest Type
SMALLER THAN AVERAGE of narrow units with adjacent mature forest	0	—	OPEN/BRUSH
	3	120'	LOWLAND DECIDUOUS
AVERAGE size/width harvest units	6	85'	LOWLAND CONIFER
	9	70'	UPLAND CONIFER
	12	60'	UPLAND DECIDUOUS
LARGER than average size/width harvest units	15+	54'	UPLAND MIXED WITH WETLAND INCLUSIONS

CONTINUUM

Note: 80% of clearcuts employing scattered leaf trees fall in this range

Note: Numbers of vertebrate species using cavity trees varies among habitats. The number of leaf trees should reflect the variation among habitats and among site conditions.



Disseminating Sustainable Forest Management Guidelines for Resource Protection

Project manager qualifications

Robert A. Slesak

Qualifications

Rob is the manager of the Site-level Program at the Minnesota Forest Resources Council. He is responsible for evaluation and development of Minnesota's Forest Management Guidelines, assessing their implementation and effectiveness with monitoring and research, and coordinating targeted training and outreach designed to improve guideline application and use. In his position at the MFRC, Rob has extensive experience convening multi-stakeholder groups to address complex forest resource issues, and identify information needs for efficient and effective solutions to the challenges of sustainable forest management. He is a principal investigator and project manager on several ongoing projects, and has also collaborated on the development of web-based guideline training led by Mr. David Chura at the MN Logger Education Program. Rob is proficient in the development and administration of competitive contracts, including development of milestones and criteria to ensure effective administration and completion of contracted work.

Responsibilities

As project manager, Rob will coordinate and manage all activities of the proposed work including development of collaborative efforts among cooperators and stakeholders for assessment of guideline content, evaluation of feedback and input from focus groups and surveys, and administration of all contracts for the design, development, and publication of finished products (web or print).

Organization description

The Minnesota Forest Resources Council is a state council composed of a broad range of stakeholder groups including the DNR, US Forest Service, County land departments, forest industry, loggers, environmental organizations, game and fish organizations, labor organizations, and forest tourism and recreation. It was established by the Sustainable Forest Resources Act (SFRA) of 1995 to promote long-term sustainable management of Minnesota's forests.

The Minnesota Logger Education Program (MLEP) provides continuing education to loggers, resource managers and landowners in the areas of sustainable forest management, transportation, business management and safety. MLEP has over 450 logging business members which are responsible for approximately 95% of the timber harvested annually in Minnesota. A core part of MLEP's mission is to develop and deliver educational training and outreach on Minnesota's Timber Harvesting and Forest Management Guidelines (FMGs).