

**Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund
2015 Request for Proposals (RFP)**

Project Title:

ENRTF ID: 078-C

Assessing Carcass Disposal Assistance for Reducing Wolf-Cattle Conflicts

Category: C. Environmental Education

Total Project Budget: \$ 72,000

Proposed Project Time Period for the Funding Requested: September 2016

Summary:

Providing reliable and confidential assistance for carcass removal to farmers in Minnesota wolf territory will be evaluated as one means of reducing wolf-livestock conflicts that losses to farmers.

Name: Timmothy Kaminski

Sponsoring Organization: Howling For Wolves

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Location

Region: NW, NE

County Name: Aitkin, Becker, Beltrami, Carlton, Cass, Clearwater, Crow Wing, Hubbard, Itasca, Kanabec, Koochiching, Lake, Mahnomen, Marshall, Mille Lacs, Otter Tail, Pennington, Pine, Polk, Red Lake, St. Louis, Stearns, Todd, Wadena

City / Township:

Alternate Text for Visual:

Map of wolf predation on livestock events in MN

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



I. PROJECT SUMMARY

We propose to implement a carcass disposal program that is easily accessed, effective and confidential for farms in wolf range. The program will be voluntary and at no cost to the producer and participating farms will be kept anonymous to the public. The program will run from November through June initially and extend to year-round where practical.

Carcass removal, a basic part of animal husbandry is sometimes logistically more problematic for farms in certain locations in Minnesota. This is particularly true for farms in northern Minnesota where the most complete method of carcass disposal; rendering, is limited in availability. Currently, no organization or extension service offers carcass removal that benefits farmers by removing dead livestock from farms in Minnesota wolf range.

The goal is to provide assistance to farms within Minnesota wolf range by removing dead livestock that serve as attractants to large carnivores during winter through spring. By reducing attractants often scavenged by wolves and other carnivores, opportunity exists to reduce and limit the amount of time that wolves, coyotes and bears spend acclimating to farms and interacting with livestock, especially cattle (calves, yearlings) that are prone to anxiety and flight. Our effort is especially targeted to a reduction in wolf-livestock conflicts, especially during the approach of calving on private lands.

Wildlife Service agents consistently report livestock carcasses on farms where wolf predation on livestock are confirmed. With consistent removal and disposal of attractants, working farm and ranch benefits and profits may improve by: 1) reducing livestock deaths and/or injuries, especially for calves and yearlings; 2) reducing harassment resulting in incomplete pasture use and/or weight loss in cattle; and 3) minimizing costly repairs in fencing and stock-related activities where livestock share private and public lands occupied by wolves.

II. PROJECT ACTIVITIES AND OUTCOMES

Activity 1: Assess Practical and available carcass disposal assistance options

Budget: \$18,000

Carcass removal assistance to farmers that experience and/or wish to avoid wolf-livestock conflicts will operate on a willing and voluntary basis. We will assess the practicality of carcass disposal options with Minnesota farmers in rural counties within wolf range as Aitkin, Cass, Itasca, Beltrami, Koochiching, Hubbard, Crow Wing and others accessible via MN Route 71 and 210. We will coordinate with local MDNA, DNR and NRCS county agents, explain the Program intent, promote merging of farmers experience and livestock management on their farms with wolf behavior and biology to improve understanding of wolf-livestock interactions and identify logistically practical options for removing and/or composting of carcasses at a central location(s).

Outcome	Completion Date
1. Carcass disposal assistance program in wolf range described and farm interest confirmed	15 August 2015
2. Logistics and options for carcass disposal assistance in select area(s) identified	15 August 2015
3. Carcass disposal mechanisms to be used in select area(s) in wolf range established	1 October 2015
4. Key agency and Tribal contacts established for coordination and cooperation	1 October 2015

Activity 2: Implement Carcass Removal and Disposal Assistance Program (Nov-May)

Budget: \$ 42,000

Implement carcass rendering and composting program in coordination with participating Minnesota farms and local agriculture and DNR offices. Provide regular communication and assistance to farmers, and use carcass removal to better farmers understanding of wolf behavior in relation to livestock with emphasis on consideration to scale of application and seasonality of carcass removal operations and approach.

Outcome	Completion Date
1. Implement comprehensive carcass disposal and composting assistance program	Nov- May 2016



2. Carcass disposal and composting program better adapted to farmer and region needs	June-July 2016
3. Carcass disposal assistance Program understood and accepted in rural/farm communities	June-July 2016

Activity 3: Evaluate Implementation and efficacy of Carcass Removal Assistance Prog. Budget: \$ 12,000

Review implementation and efficacy of carcass rendering and composting effort in coordination with participating vendor(s), Minnesota farms and local agriculture and DNR offices. Seek information on benefits, costs, relation to wolf-livestock conflicts and needs for improvement. Complete written report and seek funding based upon acceptance in participating farms, local farm communities and neighboring counties.

Outcome	Completion Date
1. Carcass disposal methods and assistance reviewed on participating farms	July 2016
2. Results of Carcass disposal effort and results shared with community at open meetings	August 2016
3. Improved Carcass disposal Program considered for renewal and expansion	August 2016

III. PROJECT STRATEGY

A. Project Team/Partners

We will cooperate with willing individual farmers identified during the assessment period, while encouraging support and participation from USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) and Minnesota Department of Agriculture and Natural Resources agencies to offer local experience toward establishing a practical and efficient livestock carcass removal and disposal assistance program in northern Minnesota. To insure compliance with existing regulations we will work closely with licensed vendors and Minnesota Departments of Pollution and Health. Contracts with established and licensed rendering service will be central to carcass removal. Where practical we will work closely with Red Lake, White Earth and Leech Lake Indian Nations to establish livestock composting locations. Working relations with county extension and USDA NRCS agents, MNDA and MNDNR will be established to guide coordination and limit redundancy in carcass disposal and disposition while highlighting farmers’ image as good land stewards and furthering of use of best practices by this project.

B. Project Impact and Long-Term Strategy

Our practical strategy to prevent and reduce wolf and carnivore conflicts with livestock by removing attractants located at or near farms in wolf range targets a seasonal reduction of conflicts during November-June, especially prior to, during and immediately following calving. Our immediate Project impact will be to reduce wolf-livestock conflicts with cattle during the first of two seasonal peaks in annual wolf-livestock conflicts (see Hart, J. 2012, Kaminski 2009). Our longer-term strategy is aimed at expanding our science-based and community driven management prototype to reduce wolf-cattle conflicts to assist Minnesota farmers with a voluntary carcass retrieval and disposal program. By working with farmers to gain a better understanding of wolf behavior, biology and movement in relation to livestock and farm management practices, we aspire to provide public benefits while helping to improve the economic sustainability of working farms and ranches in northern Minnesota.

C. Timeline Requirements

Our prototype will commence in July, 2015 with an assessment of logistics and interest by farmers in wolf range, target a geographic area by removing and disposing of dead livestock carcasses using removal and/or disposition by other means practical during November 2015-June 2016. Our prototype will conclude with an evaluation of continued interest by participating farmers, needs for improvement, Project costs and benefits in September, 2016. In subsequent years (2017), we will propose deployment of a year-long prototype and ‘working model’ designed to benefit farmers and ranchers and their livestock by reducing depredations on cattle throughout the year.

2015 Detailed Project Budget

Project Title: Assessing carcass disposal assistance for reducing wolf-cattle conflicts on Minnesota farms

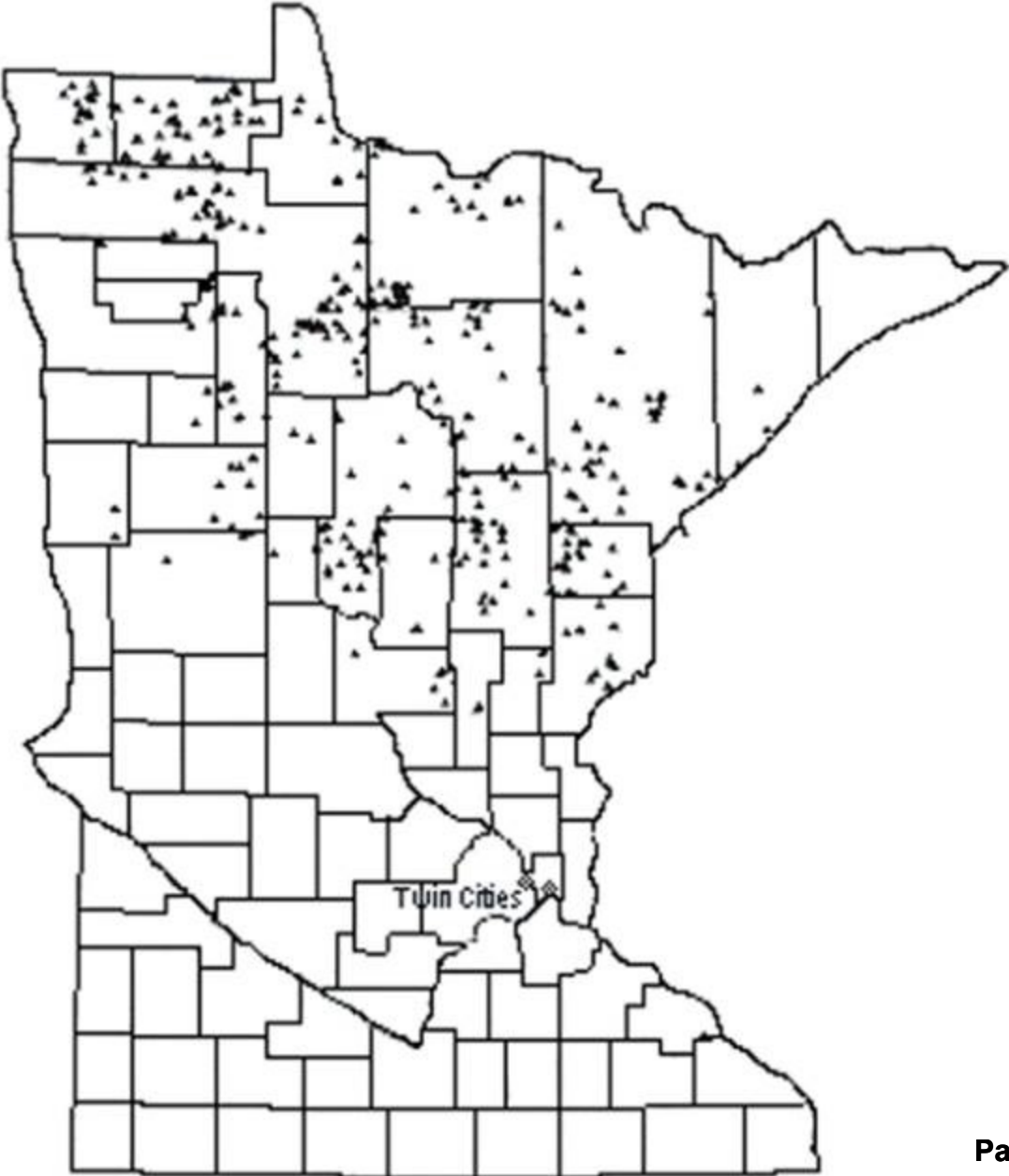
IV. TOTAL ENRTF REQUEST BUDGET 1 year, 4 months

BUDGET ITEM <i>(See "Guidance on Allowable Expenses", p. 13)</i>	AMOUNT
Personnel: Project Leader (salary/per diem/phone) Full-time (100%) 1 July- 1 October 2015 (\$15,000); 80% Time: 1 November 2015-31 May 2016 (\$19,000); Full-Time 100% 1 July 2016-30 September 2016 (\$10,000)	\$ 44,000
Contracts: Carcass Disposal Rendering Vendor and Drivers (1November 2015- 31May 2016): cost estimate done with the assistance of a Northern Minnesotarendering company. Each pick up will very but this estimate is based on years of experience.	\$ 22,000
Travel: (gas/mileage)	\$ 6,000
TOTAL ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES TRUST FUND \$ REQUEST =	\$ 72,000

V. OTHER FUNDS *(This entire section must be filled out. Do not delete rows. Indicate "N/A" if row is not applicable.)*

SOURCE OF FUNDS	AMOUNT	Status
Other Non-State \$ To Be Applied To Project During Project Period: IN Kind donation for technical assistance of \$10,000, Howling for Wolves: \$10,000	\$ 20,000	<i>Secured</i>
	NA	NA
In-kind Services To Be Applied To Project During Project Period: Kaminski personal vehicle use for travel)	\$ 6,000	<i>Secured</i>
Funding History: <i>Indicate funding secured but to be expended prior to July 1, 2015, for activities directly relevant to this specific funding request, including past and current ENRTF funds. State specific source(s) of fund and dollar amount.</i>	NA	
Remaining \$ From Current ENRTF Appropriation: <i>Specify dollar amount and year of appropriation from any current ENRTF appropriation for any directly related project of the project manager or organization that remains unspent or not yet legally obligated at the time of proposal submission. Be as specific as possible. Indicate the status of the funds.</i>	NA	<i>Indicate: Unspent? Legally Obligated? Other?</i>

Affected farms within Minnesota wolf range by county



Project Manager Qualifications for Proposal: Assessing Carcass Disposal Assistance for Reducing Wolf-Cattle Conflicts

Project Manager: Timmothy J. Kaminski

Mr. Kaminski is currently providing scientific and technical consultation and he will be the field/project manager for this project by Howling For Wolves.

Contact: Timmothy Kaminski at email: MtnlivestkCoop@icloud.com, ph. (406) 581 6775

Maureen Hackett, MD president of Howling For Wolves is the point of contact for the application process and to assist with contacting Mr. Kaminski for questions.

Mr. Kaminski is a practicing wildlife and field biologist and holds degrees in Range and Wildlife Sciences from the University of Wyoming (BSc) and Wildlife Sciences from the University of Montana (MSc) Cooperative Wildlife Research Unit and Environmental Studies program. He has nearly 30 years of experience working with wolves and large carnivores for federal, state, livestock associations and non-profit organizations. Since 2001, Timmothy Kaminski has been the principal investigator and Project Leader for the Mountain Livestock Cooperative. The Mountain Livestock Cooperative (MLC) is a regional conservation initiative focused in Alberta that combines ranching tradition and economics with a scientific understanding of carnivore-livestock interactions to sustain the working ranch and large carnivore populations in the Mountain west. With a focus on work with ranchers and livestock, he has conducted workshops for ranchers and agencies throughout the West to improve understanding of large carnivore biology and behavior in ranching communities as a means of mediating science and culture, and reducing wolf and large carnivore-livestock conflicts in the Rocky Mountains of the U.S. and Canada. His CV is available on request.

His professional career spans 3 decades. Kaminski began in northern Minnesota as a wolf field technician for L. David Mech in 1978, and returned in the early 1980s with the Northern Rocky Mountain Wolf Recovery Team to learn more about wolf-livestock relations in preparation for restoring wolves to Yellowstone. Kaminski also surveyed and trapped wolves throughout the Great Lakes region including Minnesota, Wisconsin and Michigan's Upper Peninsula in 1990.

Howling For Wolves is a wolf advocacy organization that educates the public and lawmakers about wolves in the wild in Minnesota.