

**Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund
2016 Request for Proposals (RFP)**

Project Title:

ENRTF ID: 165-F

Forest Management for Mississippi River Drinking Water Protection

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

Total Project Budget: \$ 350,000

Proposed Project Time Period for the Funding Requested: 3 years, July 2016 to June 2019

Summary:

A SWCD north central Minnesota pilot source water and watershed approach using forest stewardship plans, tax incentive programs, and targeted riparian forest restoration projects on public and private lands.

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Location

Region: Central

County Name: Cass, Crow Wing, Morrison, Todd

City / Township: Baxter

Alternate Text for Visual:

Map of the Camp Ripley Landscape Stewardship Plan Area

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



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2016 Main Proposal

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I. PROJECT STATEMENT

In order to maintain source water protection, habitat, and riparian forests, the Crow Wing Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) plans to partner across watersheds boundaries (Crow Wing, Long Prairie, Mississippi Brainerd, Platte River) with the The Nature Conservancy, MN DNR, Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) Todd, Morrison, and Cass SWCD's to implement 30 best management practices (BMPs) and 70 private forest management plans. This project is based off the most recent Camp Ripley Landscape Stewardship Plan (LSP) which is a forest management and water quality plan for 719,463 acres of area; roughly a 10-mile radius around Camp Ripley which is located north central Minnesota. This unique hydrologic confluence contains 45,000 acres of lakes and streams, 30,825 acres of permanently protected land (BWSR- RIM Easements and MNDNR Fee Acquisition), 40 miles of the Mississippi River, 52,000 acres of State Game Refuge, 13 MN DNR Wildlife Management Areas, County, and City Land. According to the US Forest Service, the Mississippi River - Brainerd and Crow Wing River Major Watersheds are ranked number 5 and 6 respectively out of 81 Minnesota major watersheds for the importance of private forests to provide clean water downstream (Forest, Water and People 2009). Upland forest lands within LSP have declined by 28 percent (200,000 acres). These riparian forest areas are threatened by rapid urban and rural residential development within the City of Baxter, Crow Wing, Cass, Morrison, and Todd Counties (MN 2010 Census Data).

For that reason, a protection strategy is needed to connect public and private forest lands. To create that protection strategy we will focus on Little Elk, Long Prairie, Crow Wing, Gull and Nokasippi Rivers subwatersheds (MN DNR Hydrological Unit Codes 12) to implement private forest management plans on working lands to enroll into Sustainable Forest Incentive Act (FSIA) or 2c tax programs and complete BMPs on private and public land. Prior to implementation, the CWC SWCD will an hire environmental consultant to analyze existing data sets, run water quality models, identify where the greatest habitat and water quality values overlap within targeted minor watersheds, and provide parcel list of targeted landowners. The CWC SWCD will lead and coordinate this project with, the environmental consultant, SWCDs, private forest plan writers, and private and public land owners. The CWC SWCD will follow MN DNR requirements for forest management plans and follow BWSR State Cost-Share Policies for BMPs which includes contracts, site inspection, plans, cost estimates, and SWCD Board approval. This project will build upon existing partnerships such as the Camp Ripley Army Compatible Use Buffer (ACUB) program and MN Forest Resource Council -North Central Landscape Committee. This project will leverage additional Clean Water Fund support through MNDNR Forestry and BWSR and other local private resources.

II. PROJECT ACTIVITIES AND OUTCOMES

Activity 1: Coordination, project management, analysis, and civic engagement.

Budget: \$45,000

Outcome	Completion Date
1. Convene and coordinate 12 partner meetings (ACUB, CR LSP, DNR Forestry, & SWCDs) to assist with data analysis, landowner outreach, and BMPs.	2016-2019
2. Parcel prioritization: contract with environmental engineer for data analysis and water quality modeling.	2016-2019
3. Targeted landowner solicitation, civic engagement, and project management (minimum of 50 landowners). This will include media resources, maps, letters, phone calls, and public meetings.	2016-2019

Activity 2: Complete 70 targeted Private Forest Management Plans.

Budget: \$105,000

Outcome	Completion Date
1. Private Forest Stewardship Plans (35) plans by Crow Wing SWCD Staff (MN DNR Certified)	2017-2019



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2. Private Forest Stewardship Plans (35) plans by private foresters (MN DNR Certified)	2017-2019
Activity 3: Implement 30 BMPs on public and permanently protected land.	Budget: \$200,000
Outcome	Completion Date
1. Riparian buffer erosion restoration (6) (to include pollinator species mix)	2017-2019
2. Riparian buffer forest restoration (12)	2017-2019
3. Riparian buffer invasive species mitigation (12) (aquatic near-shore and terrestrial)	2017-2019

III. PROJECT STRATEGY

A. Project Team/Partners

- Crow Wing SWCD
- Morrison SWCD
- Cass SWCD
- Camp Ripley
- The Nature Conservancy
- MN Forest Resource Council
- MN DNR Forestry
- Board of Water and Soil Resources
- Natural Resource Conservation Service
- Mississippi Headwaters Board

This technical team will assist with parcel prioritization process. The team plans to capitalize on existing partner landowner solicitation networks that will promote this new program, plus offer it as an additional private land owner benefit/opportunity within this targeted project area.

B. Project Impact and Long-Term Strategy

The initial project impact would affect Todd, Morrison, Cass, and Crow Wing Counties within the LSP project area working collaboratively to locally deliver private forest management plans that enable enrollment in SFIA and 2c tax programs. This minor watershed parcel prioritization methodology implements local county water plan goals that also roll up as implementation of MPCA Watershed Restoration and Protection Plan goals, for the Crow Wing River section of this project area. This new delivery system will inform and lead strategies, yet to be developed in the BWSR One Water One Plan process soon to come to these major watersheds. Long-term, this ENRTF supported pilot project would lead to a program that builds in other funding sources for sustainability. Those sources would likely include: Outdoor Heritage funds in conjunction with protection focused partners (MHB, Camp Ripley), Clean Water Funds, NRCS program, US Forest Service programs and potential federal collaborative funding through the Sentinel Landscapes program.

In summary, this pilot project targets not only the water quality and quantity resource values, but also the habitat corridors called out as a priority in the LSP and local county water plans. This project will stack public and private benefits, allow for working lands and sustainable local economy, will be administered and delivered by local government via the SWCD's, and can be ramped up to greater scale for statewide source water protection. The Mississippi Headwaters is the source water for 1.7 million river water dependent citizens today, with a growing demographic of dependence on that resource in the future.

C. Timeline Requirements

Time Frame	Activity
July 1-Dec 31, 2016	Complete bid process, hire consultant, run water quality models, complete parcel prioritization. Create stakeholder group to assist with water quality model data input and targeted outreach effort.
Spring 2017	Targeted outreach effort for Forest Management Plans & BMPs (includes letters and phone calls).
Summer 2017-2018	Write forest management plans and complete BMPs.
Winter 2019	Evaluate program success through post water and quality modeling and landowner and partner surveys.

2016 Detailed Project Budget

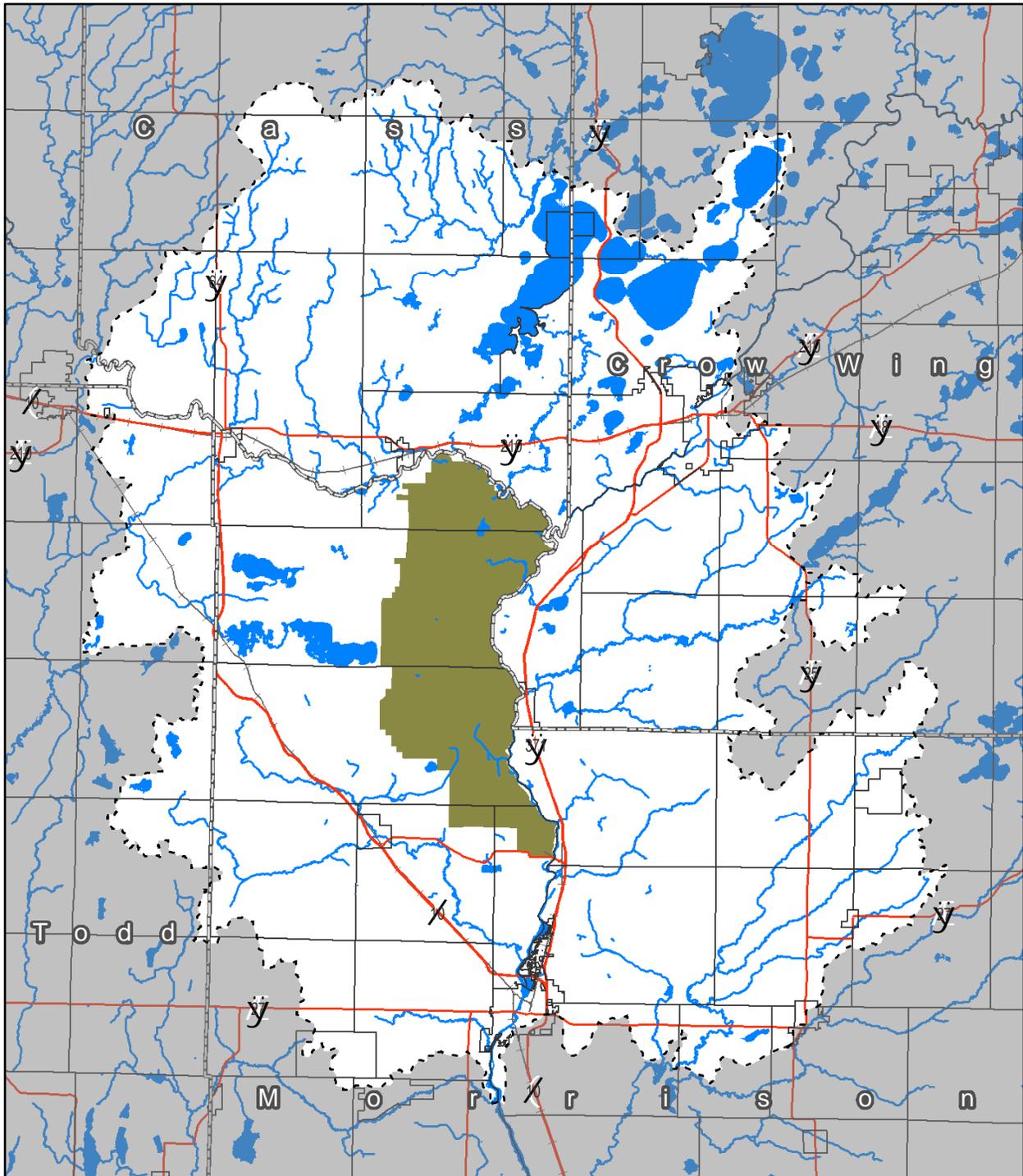
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IV. TOTAL ENRTF REQUEST BUDGET 3 years

<u>Personnel:</u>	<u>AMOUNT</u>
Personnel District Technician: SWCD (35 % EFT*1 position (80% salary & 20 % benefits) *2 yrs. [Write private forest stewardship plans and assist and inspect practices erosion restoration, forest restoration, invasive species mitigation.] Funding for this position is not provided by county or state funds. Payment for technician to write plans is \$ 200 plus 6.50 an acre (based off DNR payment schedule).	\$ 52,500
Personnel District Manager: SWCD (25% EFT* 1 position (80% salary % 20% benefits)* 3 yrs. [Coordinate civic engagement, complete semi-annual reports, landowner solicitation, and project management.] Funding for this position is not provided by county or other state funds.	\$ 30,000
Professional/Technical/Service Contracts: MN DNR Certified Forest Stewardship Plan Writers (The SWCD will have private landowners choose from a list of certified plan writers. The SWCD will pay plan writes after plan has been approved and registered by the MN DNR. Payments to Forest Stewardship Plan writers will be \$ 200 plus 6.50 an acre (based off DNR payment schedule).	\$ 52,500
Professional/Technical/Service Contracts: The SWCD will subcontract with Todd, Morrison, and Cass SWCD's to provide grant funds [Riparian Buffer Erosion (6) , Riparian Buffer forest restoration (12), projects, and riparian buffer invasive spices mitigation (12)]. Subcontract amounts will be determined after parcel list is completed. Each SWCD will than subcontract with landowners to complete BMPs. Funds will be paid to landowners after projects are completed follow BWSR State Cost-Share Policies. Estimated prices are based off local Natural Resource Conservation Service EQUIP Payment rates.	\$ 200,000
Professional/Technical/Service Contracts: The SWCD will have a contract with a engineer water quality firm to run water quality water model and develop targeted parcel list. Since contract is less than \$30,000 the SWCD will request bids from three consulting firms. The SWCD Board will approve and select the final bid.	\$ 15,000
TOTAL ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES TRUST FUND \$ REQUEST =	\$ 350,000

V. OTHER FUNDS

<u>SOURCE OF FUNDS</u>	<u>AMOUNT</u>	<u>Status</u>
During Project Period:	NA	<i>Pending</i>
Other State \$ To Be Applied To Project During Project Period: 2015 LSOCH grant for Camp Riley ACUB program will complete conservation easements within 8 mile focusing on riparian areas such as Mississippi R, Gull R, and Crow Wing River.	\$ 1,500,000	<i>Pending</i>
In-kind Services To Be Applied To Project During Project Period: The Nature Conservancy shared partner coordination through both the Camp Ripley Landscape Stewardship Plan group and Camp Ripley Army Compatible Use Buffer team 120-hours.	\$ 4,800	<i>Secured</i>
Funding History: US Forest Service grant by MN Forest Resource Council to do the Camp Ripley Landscape Stewardship Plan.	\$ 10,000	
Funding History: \$1,15,000-2013 LSOCH Grant-Mississippi River and WMA \$480,000-2012 LOSCH Grant For Camp Ripley ACUB \$843,000-2011 LOSCH Little Nokassipi River WMA	\$ 2,473,000	Secured
Remaining \$ From Current ENRTF Appropriation:	NA	



Legend

- Camp Ripley
- Camp Ripley Area
- County Boundaries
- Municipal Boundaries
- Highways
- Railroads
- Lakes
- Rivers and Streams

This project will be successful because of the Melissa Barrick's staff experience, expertise, ability to garner community support, engage citizens and nonprofit groups, build partnerships, and work with private landowners. Since 2008, Melissa Barrick has worked at the Crow Wing Soil and Water Conservation District as Water Planner and became the District Manager in 2011. Melissa has become a leader in civic engagement in the Crow Wing and Pine River Watershed, and excelled at collaborative efforts to enhance and restore area water resources. The mission of the SWCD is to provide resources and knowledge to assist public and private in land management for soil and water health benefits. Since 2010, Melissa has leveraged over two million dollars in grants to complete best management practices and improve water quality of the Brainerd Lakes Area. Prior to her work at the SWCD, she worked for Minnehaha Creek Watershed District as communication assistant. In 2005, Melissa earned a Bachelor of Science in Natural Resources and Environmental Education/Interpretation from the University of Wisconsin, Stevens Point.