

**Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund  
2018 Request for Proposals (RFP)**

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**Project Title:**

**ENRTF ID: 205-G**

Mesabi Trail, County Road 88 to Ely Segment

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**Category:** G. Land Acquisition, Habitat and Recreation

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**Total Project Budget:** \$ 600,000

**Proposed Project Time Period for the Funding Requested:** 3 years, July 2018 to June 2021

**Summary:**

3.5 mile long bituminous surface trail beginning at the intersection of Hwy 169 and County Road 88 to Ely. In Ely, connection will be made to existing Mesabi Trail.

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**Sponsoring Organization:** St. Louis & Lake Counties Regional Railroad Authority

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**Location**

**Region:** Northeast

**County Name:** St. Louis

**City / Township:** Morse

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**Alternate Text for Visual:**

Map indicates in yellow the proposed trail location

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



**PROJECT TITLE: Mesabi Trail, County Road 88 to Ely Segment**

**I. PROJECT STATEMENT**

**General:**

Running from the Mississippi to the Boundary Waters, the Mesabi Trail is a planned 10’ wide, 155 mile-long paved trail that serves as an alternate transportation corridor and recreational facility for non-motorized use namely pedestrian, bike, ski, and horses and in designated areas, winter snowmobile use. The trail will connect twenty-eight (28) communities across two counties starting in Grand Rapids and ending in Ely. Approximately 118 miles of the trail has been constructed since its inception in 1996.

**Specific:**

The County Road 88 to Ely Segment (hereafter known as the “Project”) is a 3.5 mile long, 10 feet wide bituminous paved surface with 2 foot gravel shoulders. The Project will begin at the intersection of St. Louis County Road (SLC) 88 and State Highway 1/169 and then traverse easterly approximately 3.5 miles terminating and connecting to the existing Mesabi Trail in Ely. (termination point is approximately 2 blocks west of 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave & Sheridan Street seen in yellow on attached map) The Project will likely be located within the existing road right-of-way of Highway 1/169; however, we continue to seek an off-road alignment using an abandon railroad grade or other location. The Project will connect to the forthcoming Mesabi Trail at County Road 88.

Estimated Project costs are \$900,000 for engineering, environmental, right-of-way and construction. A \$300,000 Federal Transportation Alternatives Program grant has been received for this Project available in year 2020. We are requesting \$600,000 from the ENRTF to complete this project.

**II. PROJECT ACTIVITIES AND OUTCOMES**

**Activity 1: Environmental & Permitting:**

**Budget: \$36,000**

Environmental work needed to comply with the Federal National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and State of Minnesota Environmental Protection Act (MEPA).

<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Completion Date</b>
1. Agency approvals and permits from US Army Corp of Engineers, US Fish & Wildlife, MN State Historic Preservation Office, MN Department of Natural Resources, Others	<i>June 2019</i>

**Activity 2: Right-of-Way Acquisition**

**Budget: \$18,000**

Acquire right-of-way in sufficient width for trail construction by way of recreational trail easements, licenses or permits.

<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Completion Date</b>
2. Acquire approximately 3.5 miles or 18,500 lineal feet by 40 feet wide of trail easements from private and public landowners for trail construction	<i>August 2019</i>

**ACTIVITY 3: Engineering survey, plans, construction management**

**Budget: \$126,000**

Engineering begins with support of environmental work and then construction plan and specification in accordance with and acceptable to the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and MN Dot, Office of State Aid. Engineer will also provide construction management, on-site inspections and testing oversight.



<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Completion Date</b>
Support for Environmental work	June 2019
Plans & specifications	December 2019
Final inspection and project documentation	October 2020

**ACTIVITY 4: Trail Construction**

**Budget: \$720,000**

Construct a 10’ wide bituminous surfaced trail in accordance with the MN Dot Standards for Bicycle Trails. Trail construction will include 2’ wide gravel shoulders, base preparation, grading, gravel base, ditch ways, slopes, culverts, fencing, signing, landscaping, seeding and all else necessary for a complete trail. Construction will be performed by a licensed and bonded contractor selected according to the MN State public bidding laws.

<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Completion Date</b>
Construct 3.5 miles of bituminous surface trail..	October 2020

**III. PROJECT STRATEGY**

**A. Project Team/Partners**

St. Louis & Lake Counties Regional Railroad Authority (RRA) is the project administrator and recipient of LCCMR funds. RRA works with many agencies during the planning and development process including:

- St. Louis County Environmental LGU and sponsor for FHWA funds; Public Works Director Jim Foldesi.
- St. Louis County Trail routing & design assistance through county lands; Land Office Director Mark Weber
- Morse Township Public interaction and public meetings; Morse Township Board of Supervisors
- Mesabi Trail Citizens advisory and advocacy group; Chair Bob Whalen
- Federal Highway Adm. Project review and funding Transportation Alternative Program (TAP)
- MN Dot, State Aid Project review and bidding; John McDonald MN Dot State Aid Engineer
- MN DNR Departments of Environmental, Forestry, Fish & Wildlife, Waters

**B. Project Impact and Long-Term Strategy**

The Mesabi Trail long-term strategy is to complete the trail from Grand Rapids to Ely. This strategy has not changed since year 1996. The attached Mesabi Trail map indicates the completed trail, trail under construction and those segments of trail yet to be constructed.

We have secured approximately \$3 million dollars to build several remaining trail segments and are in need of approximately \$7 million additional dollars to build those remaining trail segments seen on the attached map.

**C. Timeline Requirements**

This Project has received a \$300,000 federal Transportation Alternatives Program grant for year 2020 meaning construction will begin in approximately May and conclude in November of that year.

## 2018 Detailed Project Budget

Project Title: Mesabi Trail, County Road 88 to Ely

### IV. TOTAL ENRTF REQUEST BUDGET 3 years

<u>BUDGET ITEM</u>	<u>AMOUNT</u>
<b>Professional Service Contracts</b>	\$ -
Environmental services preliminary to construction in accordance with Federal NEPA & EPA; and Minnesota MPCA, SHPO, DNR; and local jurisdictions.	\$ 36,000
Right-of-way acquisition services for survey, legal descriptions and recording	\$ 18,000
Engineering services to support environmental work, trail design, construction plans and construction management	\$ 126,000
<b>Capital Expenditures</b>	
Construct 2.0 miles bituminous surface trail at \$210,000 per mile	\$ 420,000
<b>TOTAL ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES TRUST FUND \$ REQUEST</b>	<b>\$ 600,000</b>

### V. OTHER FUNDS

<u>SOURCE OF FUNDS</u>	<u>AMOUNT</u>	<u>Status</u>
<b>Other Non-State \$ To Be Applied To Project During Project Period:</b>	\$ -	
Federal Transportation Alternative Transportation Grant used to construct 1.5 miles bituminous surface trail	\$ 300,000	<i>secured</i>

LCCMR ML 2015  
 Highway 169 Underpass to County Road 88  
 Current Funding:  
 \$1,000,000

Wolf Creek to Hwy 169 Underpass  
 \$800,000 LCCMR Application (2018)

Highway 169 Relocation  
 \$750,000 Legacy Application (FY 2017)

County Road 88 to Ely  
 Current Funding:  
 \$300,000 Federal (FY2020)  
 \$600,000 LCCMR Application (FY 2018)  
 Total = \$900,000

CR 128 to Eagles Nest Town Hall  
 \$550,000 LCCMR Application (FY 2018)

Unfunded  
 \$3,000,000

Legacy ML 2015  
 Embarrass to County Road 26  
 Current Funding:  
 \$1,800,000

Darwin Meyers WMA to Lappas Corner  
 \$1,200,000 Shortfall

LCCMR 2017 Application  
 for Dock and Trail  
 Funding requested:  
 \$1,031,000

LCCMR ML 2016  
 Highway 135 to North of Wildlife Management Area  
 Current Funding:  
 \$1,200,000  
 07/29/2017

**Legend**

- CR 128 to Eagles Nest Town Hall
- Highway 169 Relocation (~3 miles)
- Highway 169 Underpass to County Road 88 (~3 miles)
- County Road 88 to Ely (~3 miles)
- Highway 135 to North of WMA (~3.5 miles)
- Dock and Bridge
- North of WMA to Highway 21 (~3 miles)
- Hwy 21 to County Road 26 (~7 miles)
- Wolf Creek to Hwy 169 Underpass
- County Road 26 to Tower (~6 miles)
- Existing Mesabi Trail
- Roads



Document Path: P:\P\TR\REGRA\Common\gis\Overall\_Mesabi\_Trail\_042017.mxd

## Project Manager Qualifications for ENRTF 2018 Proposal

Project manager is Robert Manzoline, Executive Director of the St. Louis & Lake Counties Regional Railroad Authority, hereafter referred to as the "Rail Authority".

Rail Authority has been working on the development of the Mesabi Trail since year 1995 and has constructed 118 miles of the trail thus far. Another 8 miles of the Mesabi Trail is under construction in year 2017 funded in part by the Environmental Trust Fund.

The project, County Road 88 to Ely segment of the Mesabi Trail is very similar to most other segments of the Mesabi Trail constructed to date. The Rail Authority is experienced with all aspects of this project including public involvement, agency contacts, environmental, engineering, construction and budgets and funding.

The Rail Authority has worked with many grant agencies over the years including LCCMR, MN State Bond, MN Legacy, MN DEED, MN IRRB and Federal Enhancement, TAP and Recreational Trails grants. Mesabi Trail grants have totaled in excess of \$13 million dollars.