Project Title: **ENRTF ID:**   206-G

State Park and Trail Integrated Public Information System

Category: G. Land Acquisition, Habitat and Recreation

Total Project Budget: $ 3,984,142

Proposed Project Time Period for the Funding Requested: 3.5 years, July 2018 to December 2021

Summary:

This project provides Minnesota State Park and Trail visitors with an integrated, next-generation information system that creates a positive, safe, and welcoming experience for all users.

Name: Stacy   Smith

Sponsoring Organization: MN DNR

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Location

Region: Statewide

County Name: Statewide

City / Township:

Alternate Text for Visual:

A state map with locations of project sites, including Minneopa State Park, Gooseberry Falls State Park, Split Rock Lighthouse State Park, Fort Snelling State Park, Lake Carlos State Park, Big Bog State Recreation Area, Jay Cooke State Park, Flandrau State Park, Frontenac State Park, William OBrien State Park, Crow Wing State Park, a segment of the Gitchi-Gami State Trail, and a segment of the Paul Bunyun State Trail. Pictures of current road wayfinding sign, trail wayfinding sign, and entry kiosk, with rendering of new road wayfinding sign, trail wayfinding sign, and entry kiosk.

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

PROJECT TITLE: State Park and Trail Integrated Public Information System

I. PROJECT STATEMENT

This project provides Minnesota State Park and Trail visitors with an integrated, next-generation information system that creates a positive, safe, and welcoming experience for all users. Minnesota state parks and trails are more popular than ever (10 million visitors in 2016), providing a statewide outdoor recreation system to visitors with a wide variety of backgrounds, some of whom are familiar with the system and others who have never before visited. Based on a 2014 Metropolitan Council study on regional park use, some of the barriers for new users to visiting parks are fear/safety issues, challenges with maps, and lack of awareness of parks. With an increase in new users and changes in the needs and expectations they may have, establishing an integrated public information package (signs, kiosks, and mobile interpretive apps) will increase system continuity and provide improved public safety; self-direction and wayfinding; and mobile interpretive opportunities. Also, by providing clear and concise information and wayfinding signage, visitors will experience a more welcoming and understandable information system to help them access and connect to all of Minnesota's outdoor recreation opportunities.

State parks and trails are uniquely positioned to provide destination-quality outdoor recreation to visitors from across the state and beyond. State units throughout the state draw visitors to areas where they may not otherwise consider visiting. This project will provide clear communication and customer service by piloting a program on two segments of state trails and, by building on a program piloted at Lake Vermilion-Soudan Underground Mine State Park, at eleven additional parks. Providing easy-to-understand entry kiosks and electronic pay stations at many of these locations will facilitate additional revenue generation, as well as cost savings, for the department. Integrating our directional signage will complement and reinforce the kiosk information, with an interpretive application that builds on the wayfinding information. A state trails pilot project will allow for the standard to help identify state trails and provide easy-to-understand wayfinding to orient users to connecting trails and amenities.

II. PROJECT ACTIVITIES AND OUTCOMES

Activity 1: Road and trail way-finding signage   Budget: $2,352,880

Provide PAT visitors with a positive, safe, and welcoming experience through a consistent, user-friendly signage and public information system. A total of eleven parks and two trail segments will have the new, integrated public information system. Visitors will experience enhanced safety, clear messaging and reduced sign clutter.

Outcome	Completion Date
1. Implement new public information system at three state park sites	12/1/19
2. Implement new public information system at five state park sites	12/1/20
3. Implement new public information system at three state park sites	12/1/21
4. Pilot new public information system program for two state trail segments	12/1/21

Activity 2: Entry kiosks and electronic pay stations for self-direction   Budget: $1,224,717

Provide visitors with essential park information at entry kiosks and electronic pay stations at eleven parks. The entry kiosks will be ADA accessible and provide self-direction, registration, and wayfinding information. Electronic pay stations will allow state parks and trails to increase efficiency and visitor self-service by allowing quick-and-easy purchase of vehicle permits, campsite reservations, or other fee-based products. The kiosks will orient visitors to the site's natural, historical, and cultural features that make that site unique.

Outcome	Completion Date
1. Set a standard and select an electronic pay station for state parks	6/1/19
2. Install electronic pay station at eight state park sites, including utilities and site work	12/1/20
3. Install electronic pay station at three state park sites, including utilities and site work	12/1/21

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Activity 3: Interactive interpretive application	Budget: $406,545

Develop an interpretive mobile phone application to pilot at two parks. Through the interpretive app, visitors will be provoked to have a stronger appreciation for both park and statewide natural, cultural, and recreational resources. In addition to state-wide information, the app will include site-specific information, games, and hiking tour opportunities with an interpretive element. Ideally, this accessible, family-friendly app will be modified in the future for other parks and trails (i.e., be a model and template for future app development).

Outcome	Completion Date
1. Develop standard application for self-guided interpretive phone application	12/1/19
2. Using standard application, add site specific content for two state park sites	12/1/20
3. Test app and roll out application for visitors use	12/1/21

III. PROJECT STRATEGY
A. Project Team/Partners
The interdisciplinary project team will consist of staff from the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, with all funds received by the DNR. Staff includes Stacy Smith, project manager; Jennifer Conrad, visitor services supervisor; Rebecca Oestreich, exhibit specialist; Amy Ellison, cartographer; and Andrew Korsberg, state trail consultant. These staff would be responsible for the integrated project design. Several park naturalists and unit managers will be responsible for providing site-specific content for the app and coordinating projects on site. There are currently no partners for this project who would receive funding, but coordination with local communities for the state trail signage project will be necessary to connect to local parks and trails.

B. Project Impact and Long-Term Strategy
Connecting people to the outdoors means breaking down barriers that inhibit them. Recreational research demonstrates that people who are new to outdoor recreational pursuits need re-assurance to feel comfortable in the great outdoors. Parks and trails has initiated an effort to establish a consistent self-direction, orientation, wayfinding, and interpretive public information program with a pilot project at our newest state park, Lake Vermilion-Soudan Underground Mine. With this proposal, parks and trails will expand the learnings from that pilot visual standard to eleven additional parks and trails sites. Future plans are to implement these standards statewide. Once developed and field tested, the interpretive mobile phone application is also a product that could be used across the statewide system. This proposal is an innovative approach to implementing a well-integrated public information system that will benefit all visitors, regardless of background, ability, or previous outdoor recreation experience.

C. Timeline Requirements
The three activities listed in the proposal will occur concurrently. The wayfinding signage will be completed within three years. Several park sites will be completed each year to meet this deadline. The state trail signs will require development of a visual standard and will include coordination with local governments, agencies, and individual landowners. For these reasons, completing the state trail signage may take up to three years to complete. The entry kiosks and pay stations will follow the same timeline as the park wayfinding signage. They will be installed in coordination with the park sites selected to be completed each year.

The mobile interpretive app involves the creation of custom elements and will require working with a consultant and Minnesota IT staff. A request for proposal (RFP) will be used to hire a consultant for this activity. While the application is being developed, park naturalists and managers will create the content for the site-specific elements of the app. Once the app is developed, we anticipate a testing period to troubleshoot the technology before the public launch of the app.

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2018 Detailed Project Budget

Project Title: State Park and Trail Integrated Public Information System

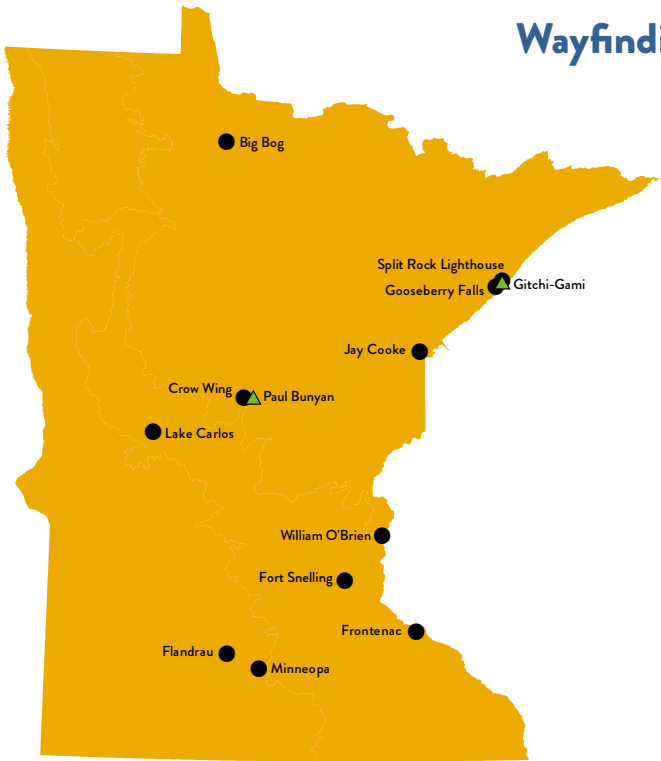**IV. TOTAL ENRTF REQUEST BUDGET 3 years**

BUDGET ITEM	AMOUNT
Personnel:	
Park Naturalist: 100% FTE for 3 years; 1 person	$ 210,000
Professional/Technical/Service Contracts:	
Single-source contract: DNR Management Resources, Design & Construction Section	$ 250,000
Single-source contract: Conservation Corps of Minnesota & Iowa, GIS work	$ 40,000
Single-source contract: Minnesota IT services	$ 25,000
RFP: Design and install state trail signage on two state trail segments	$ 230,000
RFP: Design and develop interpretive phone application	$ 400,000
RFP: Consultant for customizing electronic pay station	$ 50,000
Construction contract: Manufacture and Install wayfinding signage at elevan state parks	$ 1,835,000
Construction contract: Install entry kiosk and electronic pay stations	$ 880,000
Additional Budget Items:	$ 64,142
*Direct and Necessary expenses: HR Support (~$4,454), Safety Support (~$1,023), Financial Support (~$47,100), Communication Support (~$1,271), IT Support (~$9,223), and Planning Support (~$1,072) necessary to accomplish funded programs/projects.	
TOTAL ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES TRUST FUND $ REQUEST =	$ 3,984,142

*Direct and Necessary expenses include Department Support Services (Human Resources, IT Support, Safety, Financial Support, Communications Support, and Planning Support). Department Support Services are described in the agency Service Level Agreement and billed internally to divisions based on rate that have been developed for each area of service. These services are directly related to and necessary for the appropriation. Department leadership services (Commissioner's Office and Regional Directors) are not assessed. Those elements of individual projects that put little or no demand on support services such as large single-source contracts, large land acquisitions, and funds that are passed through to other entities are not assessed Direct and Necessary costs for those activities.

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:	$ -	
Other State $ To Be Applied To Project During Project Period:	$ 240,000	*need to acquire*
-Funding for current staff to help with contributing and managing project		
-Pre-design for wayfinding and entry kiosks at two state parks		
In-kind Services To Be Applied To Project During Project Period:	$ -	
Past and Current ENRTF Appropriation:	$ -	
Other Funding History:	$ -	

Wayfinding Signage

Current

Proposed

Trailhead Signage

Current

Proposed

Entry Kiosk

Current

Proposed

Project Locations

● State Parks

▲ State Trails

Big Bog

Split Rock Lighthouse
Gooseberry Falls ◄ Gitchi-Gami

Jay Cooke

Crow Wing ▲ Paul Bunyan

Lake Carlos

William O'Brien

Fort Snelling

Frontenac

Flandrau

Minneopa

Environment Trust Fund 2018
Project Proposal Project Title: State Park and Trail Recreational Wayfinding and Interpretation
Project Manager Qualifications

As an acquisition and development coordinator for the Division of Parks and Trails, Stacy Smith coordinates development and construction projects at state parks, state recreation areas, and public water access throughout the state. These projects contribute to and help renew Minnesota's outdoor recreation opportunities. Stacy has a master's in landscape architecture and has worked in the parks, recreation, and the design field for over 15 years. Her experience included design, construction, and project management for project ranging from small sites to park master planning. Many project included multiple disciplines and involve working with multiple user groups.

Organization Description
The Department of Natural Resources, Division of Parks and Trails operates 67 state parks, 8 state recreation areas, 575 miles of surfaced state trail, 1,610 water access sites, 30 water trails and 9 state waysides throughout Minnesota. The Division connects people to the state's natural resources by providing access to outdoor recreation, conservation education, and natural resource restoration and management. The vision of the Parks and Trails Division is to create unforgettable park, trail and water recreation experiences that inspire people to pass along the love for the outdoors to current and future generations.