

**Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund  
2019 Request for Proposals (RFP)**

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**Project Title:**

**ENRTF ID: 044-AH**

Understanding Recreational Access: Lower St. Croix Pilot

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**Category:** H. Proposals seeking \$200,000 or less in funding

**Sub-Category:** A. Foundational Natural Resource Data and Information

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**Total Project Budget: \$** 141,000

**Proposed Project Time Period for the Funding Requested:** June 30, 2022 (3 yrs)

**Summary:**

Through GIS analysis and community engagement, this pilot project will improve understanding of recreational 'supply and demand' identifying needed recreational opportunities in the Lower St. Croix.

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**Name:** DJ Forbes

**Sponsoring Organization:** The Trust for Public Land

**Title:** Program Manager

**Department:** \_\_\_\_\_

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St. Paul MN 55114

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**Email** dj.forbes@tpl.org

**Web Address** https://www.tpl.org

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**Location**

**Region:** Metro

**County Name:** Anoka, Chisago, Isanti, Ramsey, Washington

**City / Township:**

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**Alternate Text for Visual:**

Outdoor Recreational Access and Gaps Analysis - Lower St. Croix pilot focus area map

<input type="checkbox"/>	Funding Priorities	<input type="checkbox"/>	Multiple Benefits	<input type="checkbox"/>	Outcomes	<input type="checkbox"/>	Knowledge Base	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Extent of Impact	<input type="checkbox"/>	Innovation	<input type="checkbox"/>	Scientific/Tech Basis	<input type="checkbox"/>	Urgency	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Capacity Readiness	<input type="checkbox"/>	Leverage	<input type="checkbox"/>		TOTAL	<input type="checkbox"/>	%
<input type="checkbox"/> If under \$200,000, waive presentation?								



**PROJECT TITLE:** Understanding Recreational Access: Lower St. Croix Pilot

**I. PROJECT STATEMENT**

Trends show Minnesotans’ connection to the outdoors is waning due to changing demographics, competing priorities for leisure time, and deteriorating recreational infrastructure. We hypothesize that there is a disconnect between recreational access on public lands and how people wish to use those lands. To put it simply, we want to map out public land supply (access points, types of activities permitted) and public recreation demands, asking can people easily access natural resources to do the sort of outdoor activities they want to do? If not, we want to identify interventions – new access points, expanded lands and shoreline, new programming – that address public interest and encourage increased use, and ultimately help retain Minnesotans’ outdoor ethic and heritage.

Focusing on the counties within the Lower St. Croix River watershed, this project will pilot a new non-traditional, data-driven methodology called *Outdoor Recreation Access and Gaps Analysis*, a Trust for Public Land (TPL) mapping framework. This analysis catalogues currently accessible public land, then overlays community-generated data derived from community engagement and from our partner Esri, the global market leader in GIS. Based on this analysis, we can identify and prioritize new recreational access opportunities and encourage recreational access improvements, such as fishing access points, hiking trailheads, and boat launches. We can also better understand how far recreational users must travel to get to recreation areas.

The Lower St. Croix River watershed offers close-to-home access to unique natural resources for a large portion of Minnesota residents. While the Lower St. Croix is a federally-designated National Scenic Riverway, of which 41 of its 52 miles is classified as recreational, this is limited to a thin ribbon of protection with very little public access. We see an opportunity to better leverage public lands in this area by looking at recreation ‘supply and demand’ rather than just the traditional habitat conservation lens.

TPL’s user-friendly maps and data analysis will benefit public agencies, parks and conservation groups, elected officials, and others with planning tools for public lands, public access, land management and programming, and much more. This project will also help engage those Minnesota residents who are not yet public lands users because they may not realize or see the relevance of public lands in their lives, enabling more people to connect to nature and each other.

This project also supports the Minnesota’s State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) goal to *evaluate and understand the outdoor recreation needs of Minnesotans and the ability of Minnesota’s natural resources to support those needs*. In addition, this project will support the important outdoor industry in MN that contributes \$1.4 billion in state and local tax revenue (per Outdoor Industry Association).

**II. PROJECT ACTIVITIES AND OUTCOMES**

**Activity 1: Partnership and Engagement**

**Description:** Establish an Advisory Committee with community leaders, national, state and local agency staff, conservation and recreation NGOs, outdoor industry representatives, etc. Lead the advisory committee through a process to identify key parameters for the *Outdoor Recreation Access and Gaps Analysis* by eliciting perceived recreational needs and gaps. The Advisory Committee will help disseminate the key findings of the *Outdoor Recreation Access and Gaps Analysis* after it is complete, which will raise public awareness of available river-focused natural resources and their associated recreational opportunities in the pilot area and eventually statewide.

**ENRTF BUDGET:** \$50,000

Outcome	Completion Date
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**Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund (ENRTF)  
2019 Main Proposal Template**

1. Establish advisory committee	1. 8/31/2019
2. Hold 2 meetings with Advisory Committee to discuss, share Information and set objectives for this project and the Outdoor Recreation Access and Gaps Analysis specifically	2. 12/31/2019
3. Using a working version of the <i>Outdoor Recreation Access and Gaps Analysis</i> , conduct three public meetings in Lower St. Croix area to obtain feedback that guides refinement of the tool.	3. 6/30/2021
4. Disseminate findings and engage the public to raise awareness of recreation opportunities and build support for unmet recreation needs.	4. 12/31/2021

**Activity 2: Identify and Map Recreation Gaps**

**Description:** Employ *Outdoor Recreation Access and Gaps Analysis* methodology that utilizes local and regional GIS data to prioritize access improvement to lands and waters throughout the Lower St. Croix pilot area. This will include a comprehensive analysis of publically accessible open space within the four adjacent counties (Washington, Chisago, Anoka and Isanti counties) as well as an urban county that likely recreational users come from (Ramsey County). Through this analysis, identify gaps in access for recreation opportunities in demand (ex: fishing access, public boat launches, camping sites, swimming beaches). Understanding these gaps will help outdoor user groups, land managers, conservation organizations, and agency partners improve access and programming, thereby enabling more people to connect to nature.

**ENRTF BUDGET:** \$91,000

<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Completion Date</b>
1. Map the distribution of publicly accessible lands and waters relative to focus area’s population demographics.	6/30/2020
2. Obtain and incorporate community-generated data that describes residents’ recreational use and demand	9/31/2020
3. Perform access analysis and identify opportunities for new recreation opportunities	12/31/2020
4. Completion of working version of the tool for public meetings	3/31/2020
5. Utilize input from public meetings to finalize tool (see step 3 from Activity 1)	8/30/2021

**III. PROJECT PARTNERS:**

**A. Partners receiving ENRTF funding**

Not applicable.

**B. Partners NOT receiving ENRTF funding**

Public agency staff (St. Croix National Scenic Riverway, MN DNR, Counties, and local units of government), St. Croix River Association, Wilderness Inquiry, trail groups, others.

**IV. LONG-TERM IMPLEMENTATION AND FUNDING:** Strengthening the connection between land and people is vital in nurturing a sense of responsibility while ensuring the long-term stewardship of Minnesota’s natural resources. Additionally, understanding the gaps in outdoor recreational opportunities currently available provides critical information needed for future natural resource and recreation decisions. In addition to the proposed analysis for our pilot area, the Lower St. Croix River area, TPL is currently conducting the same recreational analysis methodology at a national scale, so these will be complementary. This pilot analysis is a framework that can be employed statewide at similar scales. Understanding important recreational resources, addressing access gap areas, and inspiring communities is a demand that can be uniquely met by ENRTF/LCCMR funding.

**V. TIME LINE REQUIREMENTS:** 2.5 years; until December 31st, 2021

## 2019 Proposal Budget Spreadsheet

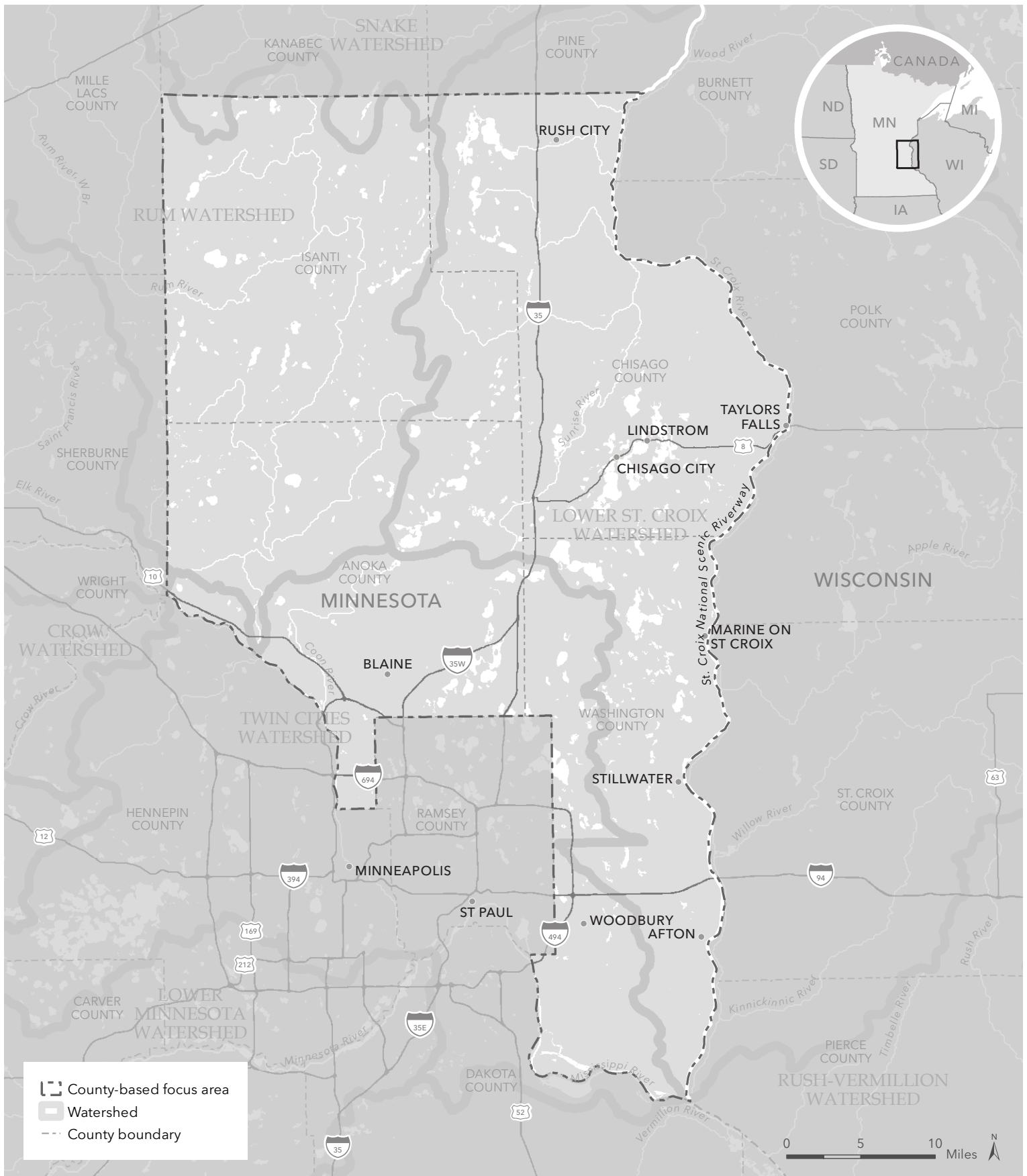
**Project Title: Understanding Recreational Access: Lower St. Croix Pilot**

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

BUDGET ITEM (See "Guidance on Allowable Expenses")	AMOUNT	
<b>Personnel:</b>	\$	138,000
Salaries - Planning Staff - .05 FTE	\$	11,000
Salaries - GIS Staff - .18 FTE	\$	32,000
Salaries - Program Staff - .16 FTE	\$	50,000
Fringe Benefits at 48% of salaries	\$	45,000
<b>Professional/Technical/Service Contracts:</b>	\$	-
<b>Equipment/Tools/Supplies:</b>	\$	-
<b>Acquisition (Fee Title or Permanent Easements):</b>	\$	-
<b>Travel:</b>	\$	-
<b>Additional Budget Items:</b>	\$	3,000
Data and Printing	\$	3,000
	\$	-
<b>TOTAL ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES TRUST FUND \$ REQUEST =</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>141,000</b>

**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
<b>Other Non-State \$ To Be Applied To Project During Project Period:</b>	\$ 59,000	Pending
<i>Indirect Costs - The Trust for Public Land will fundraise private funds to cover the necessary indirect costs and travel costs related to this project.</i>		
<b>Other State \$ To Be Applied To Project During Project Period:</b>	\$ -	
<b>In-kind Services To Be Applied To Project During Project Period:</b>	\$ -	
<b>Past and Current ENRTF Appropriation:</b>	\$ -	
<b>Other Funding History:</b>	\$ -	



# Understanding recreational access: Lower St. Croix pilot

OUTDOOR RECREATION ACCESS AND GAPS ANALYSIS, MINNESOTA



## Organization Description and Project Manager Qualifications

Since 1972, The Trust for Public Land (TPL) has protected more than 3.5 million acres, created or transformed 5,000 new public places across America, forged hundreds of active partnerships, and developed more than 2,000 miles of trails across the U.S. TPL has also helped states and local communities generate more than \$68 billion in new public funds for parks and open space.

Our strategic focus on improving outdoor access reflects learning from more than forty years protecting public land to advance our “Land for People” mission. We have heard from communities across America that access to the outdoors is central to a life well-lived, something that should be treated as a basic human right. It is well-documented that there are many other benefits communities gain from America’s lands and waters beyond just recreational access—benefits like clean water, forestry and farming, economic diversity through outdoor businesses, improved mental and physical health, stronger community ties, and spiritual inspiration. Both public and private land conservation can truly be a “triple-bottom line” investment, providing social, economic and environmental benefits for our country.

As John Muir wrote of his travels in Alaska, “In every walk with nature one receives far more than he seeks.” At TPL, we want everyone in America to experience the gifts of nature in their lives.

Below are brief biographies of The Trust for Public Land staff which are anticipated to be involved with this project.

This project will be managed by **DJ Forbes, Program Manager, The Trust for Public Land**. DJ has been with TPL for three years and supports both our Parks for People and Our Land initiatives; helping to create parks and protect land for people in both urban and rural areas. DJ manages all aspects of real estate transactions including initial research and outreach; negotiating contracts; advocating for and securing financing; and coordinating due diligence work. Prior to his work at TPL, DJ was a Senior Planner for the Active Living program at Hennepin County. He also served as a Project Manager with the City of Chelsea Department of Planning and Development in Massachusetts. DJ has a MA in Urban and Environmental Policy and Planning from Tufts University and a BA in Geography and History from DePaul University.

**Jenna Fletcher, Program Director, The Trust for Public Land**. Jenna will direct the project and manage the high-level partnerships and community engagement. She will provide strategic oversight to ensure the project delivers the desired outcomes. She will manage relationships with individuals to provide the resources to empower the project to succeed. Jenna is the Parks for People program leader in the Twin Cities, focused on creating, rebuilding and connecting parks, trails and natural areas in Minneapolis, St. Paul and first-ring suburbs, with focus on community engagement and creative place-making work that is essential to successful park development. Her interests include conservation economics, finance, and GIS analysis. Jenna has also worked for the State of Minnesota as a policy analyst on forestry issues, and researched urban smart growth practices for ICF Consulting, a national environmental public policy consulting firm. Jenna has both a Masters in Conservation Biology and an MBA from the University of Minnesota, and is a graduate of Carleton College.

**Fred Gifford, GIS Director, The Trust for Public Land**. In this role he manages and leads teams using cutting-edge GIS methodologies, tools, and frameworks for trail planning, land conservation, and green infrastructure projects across the U.S. Fred is also the Technical Lead for the TPL GIS Team and leads application development, web development, and system design and implementation efforts. Fred is an environmental management and geographic information system (GIS) professional with over 25 years’ experience. He has worked in a wide array of environmental management and GIS service areas including: business development, client management, staffing, project management, and technical oversight. Fred specializes in managing data intensive, multi-disciplinary studies and computer application development projects that utilize GIS technology. His primary application expertise relates to environmental and natural resource studies (20 years) but also includes local government, transportation, and utilities applications. His expertise includes project management, requirements analysis, system design, programming, and system implementation. Fred has designed and implemented multi-agency, multi-application GIS projects; large GIS data conversion projects; and focused single-application systems.

**Amy Morris, Associate Director of Planning, The Trust for Public Land**. She manages complex community-based planning projects including “Greenprints” (community conservation plans) and recreation and trail plans. She specializes in working with diverse partners to build community consensus and in facilitating and analyzing a wide range of community input from small focus groups to large online surveys. Before coming to The Trust for Public Land, Amy was a Senior Associate at Aspen Environmental Group, a consulting firm where she worked on environmental impact analyses for renewable energy and transportation infrastructure projects as a project manager, biologist, agricultural resources specialist, and land conservation expert. Amy has a PhD in environmental studies from UC Santa Cruz, and a BA in environmental biology from Columbia University, *magna cum laude*. She has published peer-reviewed and law review articles on conservation easements, renewable energy policy, and endangered species mitigation. She is based in San Francisco, California.