**Project Manager Qualifications**

A project manager will be contracted to oversee and manage this grant. This manager will work with and under the supervision of the MNDNR’s Forest Game Bird Coordinator, a position that the Ruffed Grouse Society shares with the MNDNR through an annual contribution to this position’s salary.

Project manager duties for this grant are expected to be contracted by RGS with Gone Wildlife Enterprises, LLC (Gary Drotts). GWE is currently under contract with RGS as a project/grant manager for existing FY17 ($217,270), FY18 ($189,475), and FY19 ($120,000) MN Conservation Partner Legacy grants RGS has secured over the last three years. GWE is also being contracted by RGS to undertake and complete the HWT Assessment report noted in the grant application.

Gary Drotts is a life-long resident of northern Minnesota, avid outdoorsman, hunter, and fisherman. This passion for the outdoors led to a BS in Wildlife Management from the University of Minnesota in 1974; a 39-year professional natural resource career working for MNDNR Wildlife in Brainerd (primarily wetland and forest habitats, retired as Area Wildlife Manager); and in retirement has stayed actively engaged in outdoor issues through volunteer efforts (recently on the Governor’s Wild Rice Task Force) and natural resource consulting efforts (Ruffed Grouse Society and National Wild Turkey Federation). Gary’s background and expertise in site needs, contracting, public land contacts, and grant administration will fit well with project manager needs for this grant.

**Organization Description**

Consult the Ruffed Grouse Society’s webpage for complete detail on this organization at [http://www.ruffedgrousesociety.org](http://www.ruffedgrousesociety.org/). The following notes a summary of this organization’s Mission Statement and About Us from this website.

*Mission Statement: Established in 1961, the Ruffed Grouse Society is North America's foremost conservation organization dedicated to preserving our sporting traditions by creating healthy forest habitat for ruffed grouse, American woodcock and other wildlife. RGS works with landowners and government agencies to develop critical habitat utilizing scientific management practices.*

*About Us: Our members are mainly grouse and woodcock hunters who support national scientific conservation and management efforts to ensure the future of the species. Our organization is headquartered in Coraopolis, PA, employs a team of wildlife biologists to work with private landowners, and government, including local, state and federal, land managers who are interested in improving their land for ruffed grouse, American woodcock and the other songbirds and wildlife that have similar requirements.*

The Ruffed Grouse Society is a national organization with chapters in 26 states and several Canadian provinces. In Minnesota they have 14 Chapters.