**PROJECT TITLE: Birch Lake Recreation Area Campground**

**I. PROJECT STATEMENT**

This project consists of expanding the existing Birch Lake Recreation Area to add a new 22 acre campground that will include 49 new campsites that will accommodate recreational vehicles as well as tent campers. Two restrooms and a camp office/shower/restroom facility will be constructed at the campground to serve campers. City utilities (water, sewer, electrical) will be extended to the campground and to the existing facilities in the recreation area. The extension of this infrastructure will also open up areas for new commercial and housing development. The Birch Lake Recreation Area sits on a 37 acre, city owned parcel located on Birch Lake. The campground will be connected to an existing paved pedestrian/bike trail that connects to the City of Babbitt and eventually to the Mesabi Trail. The campground will also connect to the new Prospector ATV trail that will serve campers looking for off trail vehicle opportunities. The City of Babbitt and the surrounded area are very limited in camping sites and the existing sites are always filled.

The existing recreation area has a beach house equipped with changing rooms, restrooms, life guard/first aid room and a concession stand. The beach area has two rafts, a water slide, a picnic area with shelters, outdoor grills, a fully equipped playground area with activities for all ages and area lighting.

The City of Babbitt has completed a total reconstruction of the boat landing area along Birch Lake. The area includes a new parking area with handicapped parking, two new docks, a new concrete boat landing ramp, a boat cleaning area and a rain garden for storm water runoff.

The Birch Lake Recreation Area is located on the shores of Birch Lake. Birch Lake is a 7,000 acre lake that is one of the most heavily fished lakes in the Tower Fisheries Management Area. The lake is 75% undeveloped and provides a BWCA experience. The BWCA is only two portages away from Birch Lake.

Birch Lake and the Birch Lake Recreation Area serves numerous tourists from all over Minnesota, the U.S. and Canada.

The total estimated cost of this project is $4,300,000. The City of Babbitt is requesting $350,000 from the 2020 ENRTF and has submitted applications to the IRRRB, State Bonding Bill and Greater MN Regional Parks and Trails Commission (See Budget Page). The City of Babbitt is recommended for $350,000 from the 2019 ENRTF and is requesting additional funds of $350,000 (balance of the 2019 ENRTF request) this year to make the project economically feasible for the City.

**II. PROJECT ACTIVITIES AND OUTCOMES**

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| **Activity 1 Title: Construction Administration****Description:** *Material Testing, Staking, Inspection and construction administration.***ENRTF BUDGET: $150,000** |  |

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| --- | --- |
| **Outcome** | **Completion Date** |
| *1. Matching Funds Secured* |  |
| *2. Materials Testing/Staking* | *November 2020* |
| *3. Construction Administration* | *December 2022* |

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| --- | --- |
| **Activity 2 Title: Project Construction** **Description:** *Construction of the Campground Sites, Campground Buildings, Campground Infrastructure.***ENRTF BUDGET: $200,000** |  |

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| **Outcome** | **Completion Date** |
| *1. Project Bid* | *February 2020* |
| *2. Construction Start* | *August 2020* |
| *3. Construction Completed* | *December 2022* |

**III. PROJECT PARTNERS AND COLLABORATORS:**

City of Babbitt Mayor and Council

City of Babbitt Staff

Prospector ATV Club

Mesabi Trail

IRRRB

Campground Operator

Consulting Engineer

General Contractor

**IV. LONG-TERM IMPLEMENTATION AND FUNDING:**

The long-term implementation consists of constructing a new campground at the Birch Lake Recreation Area in Babbitt that will provide a high quality nature and recreation experience for people of all ages. The campground will be open to the general public and will be open annually from May – September. The campground will provide a variety of activities including water recreation, access to non-motorized trails, access to an ATV trail system and tent and RV camping sites. The future funding for the maintenance and/or expansions of the campground will be provided by the City of Babbitt through their annual budget and through campground user fees. The City of Babbitt has been recommended for funds from the State Bonding Bill, LCCMR and the IRRRB. Any revenue generated from the campground will be reinvested in the campground.