



# Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund

## 2021 Request for Proposal

### General Information

**Proposal ID:** 2021-162

**Proposal Title:** Oak Wilt Suppression at the Northern Edge II

### Project Manager Information

**Name:** Shannon Wettstein

**Organization:** Morrison Soil and Water Conservation District

**Office Telephone:** (320) 631-3553

**Email:** shannon.wettstein@morrisonswcd.org

### Project Basic Information

**Project Summary:** Suppress oak wilt at the leading edge to prevent infestation in private and public forests to the north and west including Pillsbury State Forest and Camp Ripley.

**Funds Requested:** \$498,000

**Proposed Project Completion:** 2023-06-30

**LCCMR Funding Category:** Aquatic and Terrestrial Invasive Species (D)

### Project Location

**What is the best scale for describing where your work will take place?**

Region(s): Central

**What is the best scale to describe the area impacted by your work?**

Region(s): Central

**When will the work impact occur?**

During the Project

## Narrative

### **Describe the opportunity or problem your proposal seeks to address. Include any relevant background information.**

The overall goal for this project is to suppress oak wilt on all known sites in Morrison County. Eradicating the oak wilt sites will protect the surrounding forest, arrest oak wilt spread to the north and west, and ease the financial burden of oak wilt to landowners in Morrison County and communities to the north.

Oak wilt is a burgeoning invasive problem near Little Falls and threatens movement into the Brainerd area. It has the potential to kill significant percentages of trees in the nearly pure red oaks forests of the area. Oak wilt spots in Morrison County are at the edge of the known disease range in central Minnesota. Control of invasive species is optimal at their leading edge. If oak wilt is not controlled soon in this area, it will quickly grow to an unmanageable situation.

### **What is your proposed solution to the problem or opportunity discussed above? i.e. What are you seeking funding to do? You will be asked to expand on this in Activities and Milestones.**

Morrison County SWCD staff will contact landowners to explain the importance of oak wilt control and seek permission for control. SWCD will use grant funds to contract out 100 percent of the control work, including vibratory plowing and diseased tree removal and destruction. DNR forest health (FH) staff will help the SWCD through their on-going forest health detection surveys and through technical training and advising. If oak wilt is found in the Brainerd area, this grant would be applied there, as well as at other future oak wilt outlier locations in Todd, Cass, Crow Wing, or northern Mille Lacs counties.

### **What are the specific project outcomes as they relate to the public purpose of protection, conservation, preservation, and enhancement of the state's natural resources?**

While the project is focused on private lands, the public good comes from controlling and preventing the spread of oak wilt to both public and private forests, resulting in preserved wildlife habitat and ecosystem services these healthy forests provide. Oak wilt will be eradicated in all disease locations identified by DNR and SWCD staff where landowners sign up for control, thus enhancing those forests and protecting surrounding healthy forests. Currently there are 85 known unmanaged or partially managed pockets of oak wilt in Morrison County. With projected spread, it is estimated this funding would allow treatment at 120 sites.

## Activities and Milestones

### Activity 1: Secure Permission to Control Oak Wilt

**Activity Budget:** \$97,850

**Activity Description:**

SWCD staff will establish face to face meetings with affected landowners to secure permission to control oak wilt on their land. Currently there are 85 unmanaged or partially managed pockets of oak wilt on 48 different landowner parcels. Northernmost sites (closest to the Pillsbury State Forest, Camp Ripley, and Brainerd) will be controlled first. As the disease spreads and where landowners agree, treatment could be funded on up to 120 sites. SWCD will also provide technical assistance to affected landowners throughout the project.

**Activity Milestones:**

Description	Completion Date
Host an open house for affected landowners	2021-07-31
Get signed landowner agreements from affected property owners - known locations	2021-12-31
Get signed landowner agreements for affected property owners - those identified 2021-2022	2022-12-31
Provide public outreach materials throughout project	2023-04-30
Provide technical assistance to affected landowners throughout project duration	2023-04-30

### Activity 2: Establish Contracts with Vibratory Plow Companies to Control Oak Wilt

**Activity Budget:** \$400,150

**Activity Description:**

SWCD staff will secure contracts with companies for oak wilt control, including vibratory plowing and diseased tree removal and destruction. An optional additional control tactic would be for threatened tree removal (i.e. removal of healthy oaks inside plow lines that likely will die of oak wilt in the future).

**Activity Milestones:**

Description	Completion Date
Request for Proposal (RFP) for work released via newspaper and vibratory plow company solicitation	2021-08-31
Secure contracts with company or companies	2021-09-30
Begin oak wilt control on selected properties with known oak wilt pockets	2021-10-31
Complete oak wilt control on selected properties with known oak wilt pockets	2022-04-30
Begin oak wilt control on selected properties identified in 2021-2022	2022-10-31
Complete oak wilt control on selected properties identified in 2021-2022	2023-04-30

## Project Partners and Collaborators

Name	Organization	Role	Receiving Funds
Rachel Nicoll	Department of Natural Resources	Forest Health Specialist for DNR Forestry, Northwest Region to provide early detection of oak wilt through on-going forest health surveys in Crow Wing and Cass counties; public notification on oak wilt locations; advise and train SWCD staff on all aspects of oak wilt control; communicate to relevant SWCDs.	No
John Korzeniowski	Department of Natural Resources	DNR Area Forestry Manager for Little Falls and Backus areas will provide assistance as needed to area SWCD staff with landowner contacts and public meetings. Will also provide assistance, as needed, to DNR Forest Health Unit staff.	No
Brian Schwingle	Department of Natural Resources	Forest Health Specialist for the DNR Forestry, Central Region will do early detection of oak wilt through on-going forest health surveys in Todd, Morrison and Mille Lacs counties; public notification on oak wilt locations; advise and train SWCD staff on all aspects of oak control; communicate with relevant SWCDs.	No

## Long-Term Implementation and Funding

**Describe how the results will be implemented and how any ongoing effort will be funded. If not already addressed as part of the project, how will findings, results, and products developed be implemented after project completion? If additional work is needed, how will this be funded?**

The DNR Forest Health team receives a forest health monitoring grant to generally survey the health of the state's forest canopy every year. They will monitor the success of oak wilt eradication efforts in Morrison County, and they will continue to track the leading edge of oak wilt in the state. Also, the DNR secured funding to control oak wilt on public lands in the state on priority sites. If oak wilt arises after control efforts have been completed in Morrison County, the SWCD or DNR may seek another control grant for private lands.

## Other ENRTF Appropriations Awarded in the Last Six Years

Name	Appropriation	Amount Awarded
Oak Wilt Suppression at its Northern Edge	M.L. 2019, First Special Session, Chp. 4, Art. 2, Sec. 2, Subd. 06b	\$100,000
Morrison County Performance Drainage and Hydrology Management	M.L. 2016, Chp. 186, Sec. 2, Subd. 04r	\$209,000

## Project Manager and Organization Qualifications

**Project Manager Name:** Shannon Wettstein

**Job Title:** District Manager

**Provide description of the project manager's qualifications to manage the proposed project.**

Shannon Wettstein, District Manager for Morrison Soil and Water Conservation District holds an MBA from the University of Chester England and an Environmental Studies degree from the University of Minnesota Duluth. She has served in this role since 2018, prior to this she worked as the Water Planner in another district.

Morrison SWCD has a long successful history of administering and executing grants such as MPCA 319 grants, Clean Water Funds, Special Project grants through BWSR; Challenge Grants, as well as the budget for the district which includes multiple sources of funding from the state, county, and federal funds. The district also administers the MN Wetland Conservation Act, the Local Water Plan, and one of the biggest easement programs in the state, the Army

Compatible Use Buffer Program which holds just under 300 easements funded by the Dept. of Defense, LSOHC, and National Guard Bureau which has received nearly \$39,000,000 to date. The mission of Morrison SWCD is to provide leadership and direct assistance for conservation management of soil and water.

**Organization:** Morrison Soil and Water Conservation District

**Organization Description:**

Morrison Soil and Water Conservation District's mission is to "To provide leadership and direct assistance for conservation management of soil and water." The district is directed by a five-member Board of Supervisors, each is elected to serve a four year term of office. The SWCD has five staff and they are responsible for carrying out the goals of the District. The primary focus of the district is offering technical assistance to landowners and to provide cost share assistance to install conservation practices on private lands. Morrison SWCD also has a long history of partnerships with other local, state and federal agencies who work in the area. Morrison SWCD has been a leader in the natural resource community and is often the first place citizens, county commissioners and agency staff call to find answers and get assistance on resource concerns.

Morrison SWCD offers a diverse amount of programs including: Army Compatible Use Buffer (ACUB) and other RIM easement programs, AgBMP, Buffer Law assistance, climatology reporting, Water Plan admin., hydrology, forestry, shoreland and nutrient management technical assistance and state and federal cost share assistance through multiple funding pools, native plant community restoration, nitrate testing, certified wetland delineations and Wetland Conservation.

## Budget Summary

Category / Name	Subcategory or Type	Description	Purpose	Gen. Ineligible	% Benefits	# FTE	Classified Staff?	\$ Amount
<b>Personnel</b>								
Technician		Landowner outreach and technical assistance			33%	0.6		\$84,000
Project Manager/Administration		Billing, reporting, contract management, support			33%	0.1		\$12,600
							<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>\$96,600</b>
<b>Contracts and Services</b>								
Private Contractor TBD	Professional or Technical Service Contract	Vibratory plowing, tree felling and tree removal contractor. Competitive bids will be solicited.				1		\$400,000
							<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>\$400,000</b>
<b>Equipment, Tools, and Supplies</b>								
							<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Capital Expenditures</b>								
							<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Acquisitions and Stewardship</b>								
							<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Travel In Minnesota</b>								
	Miles/ Meals/ Lodging	Mileage	Travel to affected landowner properties					\$1,000
							<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>\$1,000</b>
<b>Travel Outside Minnesota</b>								
							<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Printing and Publication</b>								
	Publication	Legal Notices	RFP Announcement					\$150

	Printing	Public outreach mailings	Outreach to affected landowners, information packets on disease and cost share assistance, landowner interest forms and documentation					\$250
							<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>\$400</b>
<b>Other Expenses</b>								
							<b>Sub Total</b>	-
							<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>\$498,000</b>

Classified Staff or Generally Ineligible Expenses

Category/Name	Subcategory or Type	Description	Justification Ineligible Expense or Classified Staff Request
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Non ENRTF Funds

Category	Specific Source	Use	Status	Amount
<b>State</b>				
In-Kind	Department of Natural Resources, Area Forestry Office Staff, Little Falls	Assistance, as needed to area SWCD staff with landowner contacts and public meetings. Assistance, as needed to DNR Forest Health Unit staff.	Secured	\$8,000
In-Kind	Department of Natural Resources, Forest Health Specialist	Early detection of oak wilt through on-going forest health surveys; public notification on oak wilt locations; advise and train SWCD staff on all aspects of oak wilt control; communicate to all SWCDs which landowners are affected.	Secured	\$14,170
			<b>State Sub Total</b>	<b>\$22,170</b>
<b>Non-State</b>				
			<b>Non State Sub Total</b>	-
			<b>Funds Total</b>	<b>\$22,170</b>

## Attachments

### Required Attachments

#### *Visual Component*

File: [8efb031a-dee.pdf](#)

#### *Alternate Text for Visual Component*

Map shows red oak densities in north central Minnesota with known oak wilt locations pinpointed. The map draws attention to the leading edge of oak wilt infestation located in Morrison County and the proximity to Camp Ripley and the Pillsbury State Forest. The area circled shows the working area of the grant which includes Morrison County but could extend into Todd, Crow Wing, Cass and Mille Lacs Counties if oak wilt were identified.

#### *Board Resolution or Letter*

Title	File
Morrison SWCD Board Resolution	<a href="#">b18bf1a6-84d.docx</a>

### Optional Attachments

#### *Support Letter or Other*

Title	File
Camp Ripley Letter of Support	<a href="#">157a0109-36f.docx</a>
DNR Letter of Support	<a href="#">e846bb05-a8f.pdf</a>

## Administrative Use

**Does your project include restoration or acquisition of land rights?**

No

**Does your project have patent, royalties, or revenue potential?**

No

**Does your project include research?**

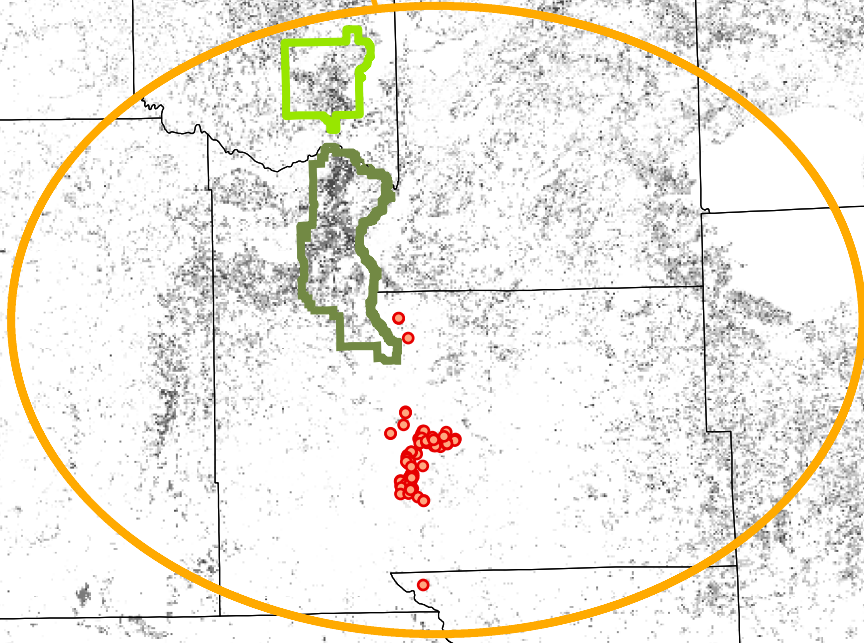
No

**Does the organization have a fiscal agent for this project?**

No

# Proposed zone for oak wilt control from ENRTF grant

Focus area for oak wilt control grant



## Legend

- Confirmed oak wilt, 1987-2019
- ▭ Pillsbury State Forest
- ▭ Camp Ripley
- ▭ Red oak group density

Map produced by Minnesota DNR forest health unit on 3/30/2020. Density of red oak is from USDA Forest Service (<http://dx.doi.org/10.2737/RDS-2013-0013>). Mapped oak wilt only represents past confirmations, and some is no longer present due to control. Some undetected oak wilt is likely unmapped.

