



Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund

2021 Request for Proposal

General Information

Proposal ID: 2021-434

Proposal Title: Crow Wing County Community Natural Area Acquisition

Project Manager Information

Name: Ryan Simonson

Organization: Crow Wing County

Office Telephone: (218) 824-1355

Email: ryan.simonson@crowwing.us

Project Basic Information

Project Summary: Acquire private land surrounding a historic fire tower to protect and provide a buffer to the tower itself while creating interpretive walking trails on the newly acquired property.

Funds Requested: \$405,000

Proposed Project Completion: 2021-11-30

LCCMR Funding Category: Land Acquisition for Habitat and Recreation (G)

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, NE, NW,

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 main opportunity/problem here is the chance that someone may develop the land surrounding the fire tower with an incompatible use. Some of the land is zoned commercial. We would prefer to see the land surrounding the historic fire tower be preserved which will also provide a buffer to the fire tower.

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.

The proposed solution is for the County to acquire this property to ensure it stays protected in public ownership.

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?

With the addition of 69 surrounding acres of forested land this would become a larger complex to support educational, historic and recreational uses for the community. The timing of the county acquisition and the willingness of neighboring landowners to support this proposal, make this an important window of opportunity to develop on an excellent public asset.

Activities and Milestones

Activity 1: Acquire adjacent land

Activity Budget: \$404,998

Activity Description:

An appraisal of the approved parcels will be conducted and negotiations with the two private land owners will be conducted. The property will then be transferred to Crow Wing county and within 60 days of the transaction the county will provide a report to the LCCMR.

Activity Milestones:

Description	Completion Date
Appraise parcels	2020-05-31
Report provided to LCCMR	2021-11-30
Purchase parcels	2021-11-30

Activity 2: Forest management

Activity Budget: \$1

Activity Description:

Crow Wing county will conduct a selective timber harvest on newly acquired lands surrounding the Pequot Lakes fire tower for forest management as well as invasive species control if identified.

Activity Milestones:

Description	Completion Date
Timber harvest	2021-09-30

Activity 3: Develop public use amenities

Activity Budget: \$1

Activity Description:

Create interpretive walking trails and install a kiosk near the fire tower with information on the history of the site and post appropriate signage along trails.

Activity Milestones:

Description	Completion Date
Post signage	2021-10-31
Create trails	2021-10-31

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?

This is a fee title acquisition and minimal work will be required after the project is complete. We will create interpretive walking trails on the property. We will also manage the timber resource on the property. Creating trails costs money, and managing the timber brings in revenue. We ask that we be allowed to retain any revenue from timber management to help offset the cost of trail development.

Project Manager and Organization Qualifications

Project Manager Name: Ryan Simonson

Job Title: Environmental Services Supervisor

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

Crow Wing County is certified under the Sustainable Forestry Initiative, which is a third-party certification agency that performs rigorous audits each year to ensure sustainable forest management is being practiced on the 105,000 acres of public lands managed by the County. Crow Wing County is the sponsor of over 1,000 miles of designated trail systems, including 790 miles of snowmobile trails, 177 miles of multi-use off highway vehicle trails, 32 miles of cross-country ski trails, and 31 miles of non-motorized hunter/hiking trails. Crow Wing County also manages 117 acres of designated park facilities, including 2 islands on the Whitefish Chain of Lakes which include several campsites and miles of hiking trails through old growth forests, the Milford Mine Park which is a memorial located on the site of Minnesota's worst mining disaster that occurred on February 5, 1924, the South Long Lake Community Park which includes a fishing pier and picnic area, and of course the recently acquired Pequot Lakes Fire Tower which the County plans to make improvements and open for public use in the near future. Over the past decade, Crow Wing County has made recreation a top priority, and has proven its ability to develop and manage multiple park and trail systems.

Organization: Crow Wing County

Organization Description:

Crow Wing County is located in central Minnesota. Their vision; to be Minnesota's favorite place. Crow Wing County will achieve its vision by undertaking this mission: To be a leader among Minnesota Counties in providing best in class professional natural resource management that support local economies, protects water and wildlife resources and provides diverse recreational opportunities. (See Crow Wing County Forest Resources Plan).

Budget Summary

Category / Name	Subcategory or Type	Description	Purpose	Gen. Ineligible	% Benefits	# FTE	Classified Staff?	\$ Amount
Personnel								
							Sub Total	-
Contracts and Services								
							Sub Total	-
Equipment, Tools, and Supplies								
							Sub Total	-
Capital Expenditures								
							Sub Total	-
Acquisitions and Stewardship								
	Fee Title Acquisition	Acres: 69 Parcels: 3						\$405,000
							Sub Total	\$405,000
Travel In Minnesota								
							Sub Total	-
Travel Outside Minnesota								
							Sub Total	-
Printing and Publication								
							Sub Total	-

Other Expenses								
							Sub Total	-
							Grand Total	\$405,000

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
State				
			State Sub Total	-
Non-State				
			Non State Sub Total	-
			Funds Total	-

Acquisition and Restoration

Parcel List

Name	County	Site Significance	Activity	Acres	Miles	Estimated Cost	Type of Landowner	Easement or Title Holder	Status of Work
Parcel #: 290113100A00009	Crow Wing	Forest habitat	Fee Title	18	-	\$110,000	Private	Crow Wing County	Negotiations in Progress
Parcel #: 290113400A00009	Crow Wing	Forest habitat	Fee Title	10	-	\$130,000	Private	Crow Wing County	Negotiations in Progress
Parcel #: 290114200000009	Crow Wing	Forest habitat	Fee Title	41	-	\$155,000	Private	Crow Wing County	Negotiations in Progress
Totals				69	0	\$395,000			

Fee Acquisition

1. Describe the selection process for identifying and including proposed parcels on the parcel list, including an explanation of the criteria and decision-making process used to rank and prioritize parcels.

The three parcels on the list are adjacent to a historic fire tower that is owned by the county and listed on the national register of historic places. These three parcels are vacant private land and the hope is to protect them from development.

2. List all adopted state, regional, or local natural resource plans in which the lands included in the parcel list are identified for the acquisition purposes you propose. Include the URL to the plan if one is available.

Crow Wing County Forest Resources Plan

<https://www.crowwing.us/DocumentCenter/View/8899/Crow-Wing-Forest-Plan-2015-FINAL?bidId=>

3. For any parcels acquired in fee title, a restoration and management plan must be prepared. Summarize the components and expected outcomes of restoration and management plans for parcels acquired by your organization, how these plans are kept on file by your organization, and overall strategies for long-term plan implementation, including how long-term maintenance and management needs of the parcel will be financed into the future.

The acquired parcels will be managed the same as the other 105,000 acres of county managed tax forfeited lands, in accordance with the County Forest Resources Plan and the Minnesota Site Level Forest Management Guidelines developed by the MN Forest Resources Council.

4. For each parcel to be conveyed to a State of Minnesota entity (e.g., DNR) after purchase, provide a statement confirming that county board approval will be obtained.

The County Board has approved acquiring this parcel.

5. If applicable (see M.S. 116P.17), provide a statement confirming that written approval from the DNR Commissioner will be obtained 10 business days prior to any final acquisition transaction.

Written approval from the DNR Commissioner will be obtained 10 business days prior to any final acquisition transaction.

Attachments

Required Attachments

Map

File: [ffd23679-d30.pdf](#)

Alternate Text for Map

The county owned fire tower property is outlined in white, and the 3 private parcels to be acquired are numbered 1, 2, and 3.

Board Resolution or Letter

Title	File
County Board Letter of Support	8e674b51-b01.pdf

Administrative Use

Does your project include restoration or acquisition of land rights?

Yes: Fee Acquisition,

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

Yes,

- Potential revenue generated or net income from the sale of products or assets developed or acquired with ENRTF funding

Does your project include research?

No

Does the organization have a fiscal agent for this project?

No

Proposed Crow Wing County Natural Area

