



Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund

2023 Request for Proposal

General Information

Proposal ID: 2023-148

Proposal Title: Acquisition of State Parks and Trails In-holdings

Project Manager Information

Name: Shelby Kok

Organization: MN DNR - State Parks and Trails Division

Office Telephone: (651) 259-5590

Email: shelby.kok@state.mn.us

Project Basic Information

Project Summary: Acquire top priority in-holdings within legislatively established boundaries of Minnesota's 75 State Parks and State Recreation Areas and 26 State Trails from willing sellers.

Funds Requested: \$6,211,000

Proposed Project Completion: July 31, 2025

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

Project Location

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

Statewide

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

Statewide

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.

This proposal is an investment in the future, fulfilling legislative direction to acquire parcels from willing sellers within legislatively authorized and defined state parks, state recreation areas and state trails systems. This project will protect and enhance Minnesota's environment and natural resources, promote positive economic impacts and increase outdoor recreation opportunities for all Minnesota citizens and visitors. Most Minnesota state parks and trails in-holdings are once-in-a-lifetime opportunities. Interested willing sellers often have a vision to include their family's treasured property as a part of a State Park or State Trail for the public to enjoy their land into perpetuity. If funding is unavailable to pursue an acquisition, the property is at risk to be subdivided, developed or taken off the market for decades.

What is your proposed solution to the problem or opportunity discussed above? Introduce us to the work you are seeking funding to do. You will be asked to expand on this proposed solution in Activities & Milestones.

Currently, the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (MN DNR) does not own and manage on behalf of the public approximately 15% (41,900 acres) of land located within the legislatively approved and statutorily described boundaries of the 66 Minnesota state parks and nine state recreation areas. The MN DNR currently owns and manages on behalf of the public approximately 50% of the land needed to complete the 26 legislatively authorized State Trails. The MN DNR has identified and ranked each parcel within legislatively defined boundaries and alignments for state parks and Trails. The MN DNR maintains, reviews and annually updates a general statewide priority list of willing sellers. Potential projects are analyzed using investment criteria established in the DNR Parks and Trails System Plan.

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?

The successful acquisition of the identified properties will result in expanded natural and cultural resources protection and restoration, environmental educational programming, increased economic activity in local communities, and enhanced outdoor recreation opportunities to engage current and future generations in Minnesota's great outdoors.

Activities and Milestones

Activity 1: State Park and Recreation Area Inholdings

Activity Budget: \$5,880,000

Activity Description:

This project proposes the acquisition of high priority property in-holdings located entirely within the boundaries of state parks and State recreation areas. The successful acquisition of these properties will eliminate the potential for future development and associated resource fragmentation within the statutory boundaries of state parks and state recreation areas that are inconsistent with legislative intent and the unit's management plans. The primary benefit of State acquisition of the identified properties, however, is the opportunity provided to conserve and protect substantial areas that contain rare, unique, or high-quality natural resource communities and areas of significant biodiversity while also expanding the potential for public recreational access to areas which were previously inaccessible or privately held. There is a potential need for site cleanup after acquisition of the property. The priority properties to be considered for acquisition under this project are proposed in William O'Brien, Crow Wing, Lake Maria, Gooseberry Falls State Park and Minnesota Valley State Recreation Area. Should one of these acquisitions be unsuccessful, the MN DNR will request an amendment to the Project Workplan that will identify a replacement property selected from a statewide priority list.

Activity Milestones:

Description	Completion Date
Priority park and recreation area inholdings identified and preliminary work or agreement made	December 31, 2023
Other or secondary inholdings identified if needed	June 30, 2024
LAM acquisition services complete priority park and recreation area inholdings	June 30, 2024
Priority inholdings complete	December 31, 2024
LAM acquisition services complete secondary inholdings	December 31, 2024
Secondary inholdings complete	June 30, 2025
Restoration priority & secondary inholdings complete	June 30, 2025

Activity 2: Legislatively Authorized State Trails

Activity Budget: \$331,000

Activity Description:

Acquire high priority in-holdings along legislatively authorized state trails from willing sellers statewide to fulfill master plans throughout the State of Minnesota. There is a potential need for site cleanup after acquisition of the property. Potential high priority parcels include in-holdings in the following locations: Casey Jones, Cuyuna Lakes, Arrowhead, Taconite, Blazing Star and Mill Towns State Trails. Should one of these acquisitions be unsuccessful, the MN DNR will request an amendment to the Project Workplan that will identify a replacement property selected from a statewide priority list.

Activity Milestones:

Description	Completion Date
Priority trail inholdings identified and preliminary work or agreement made	December 31, 2023
Other or secondary inholdings identified if needed	June 30, 2024
LAM acquisition services complete priority trail inholdings	June 30, 2024
Priority inholdings complete	December 31, 2024
LAM acquisition services complete secondary inholdings	December 31, 2024
Secondary inholdings complete	June 30, 2025
Restoration priority & secondary inholding complete	June 30, 2025

Project Partners and Collaborators

Name	Organization	Role	Receiving Funds
Brett Feldman	Parks and Trails Council of Minnesota	The Parks and Trails Council provides support and advocacy for State Park Improvements and In-Holding Acquisition.	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 work be funded?

Each of the properties identified for potential acquisition are located within existing state park or state recreation area boundaries or along authorized state trail corridor. All facilities are components of the Outdoor Recreation System which require individual master plans to guide land acquisition, development and improvement, public use and resource management. The Parks and Trails Division maintains an active priority parcel list of potential acquisitions to pursue, based on available funding sources. All property surveys, valuations, negotiations and transactions will be completed by the staff of the MN DNR Lands and Minerals Division.

Other ENRTF Appropriations Awarded in the Last Six Years

Name	Appropriation	Amount Awarded
Minnesota State Parks and State Trails Land Acquisition	M.L. 2017, Chp. 96, Sec. 2, Subd. 09c	\$1,500,000
Minnesota State Parks and State Trails	M.L. 2018, Chp. 214, Art. 4, Sec. 2, Subd. 09k	\$2,500,000
Minnesota State Parks and State Trails In-Holdings	M.L. 2019, First Special Session, Chp. 4, Art. 2, Sec. 2, Subd. 09c	\$2,000,000
Minnesota State Parks And State Trails Inholdings	M.L. 2021, First Special Session, Chp. 6, Art. 5, Sec. 2, Subd. 09c	\$3,500,000
State Parks And State Trails In-Holdings	M.L. 2021, First Special Session, Chp. 6, Art. 6, Sec. 2, Subd. 09u	\$2,560,000

Project Manager and Organization Qualifications

Project Manager Name: Shelby Kok

Job Title: Acquisition Consultant

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

Shelby Kok has been an employee of the State of Minnesota Department of Natural Resources for 9 years. For the last 2 years, she has been in the Land Acquisition and Real Estate Consultant for the division of Parks and Trails. Shelby manages the statewide land acquisition prioritization planning and transaction process for property located within legislatively defined State Parks, State Recreation Areas, State Trails, and Public Water Access systems from willing sellers. She strives to ensure successful acquisitions of high priority, critical in-holdings that provide protection of Minnesota's natural and cultural resources, promote positive economic impacts, and enhance outdoor recreation opportunities for all the citizens of Minnesota to enjoy and appreciate.

Organization: MN DNR - State Parks and Trails Division

Organization Description:

The Department of Natural Resources, Parks and Trails Division operates 67 state parks, 8 state recreation areas, more

than 650 miles of surfaced, improved state trail, 1,610 water access sites, 30 water trails and 9 state waysides throughout Minnesota. The Parks and Trails Division connects people to the state's natural resources by providing access to outdoor recreation, conservation education and natural resource restoration and management. The vision of the Parks and Trails Division is to create unforgettable park, trail and water recreation experiences that inspire people to pass along the love for the outdoors to current and future generations. More information on the Minnesota DNR can be found at MNDNR.gov

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: 876.5 Parcels: 17						\$5,978,500
	Trail Easement Acquisition	Parcels: 2 Miles: 6.5						\$232,500
							Sub Total	\$6,211,000
Travel In Minnesota								
							Sub Total	-
Travel Outside Minnesota								
							Sub Total	-
Printing and Publication								

							Sub Total	-
Other Expenses								
							Sub Total	-
							Grand Total	\$6,211,000

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				
Cash	Parks and Trails Legacy Funds	Parks and Trails Division Allocation for State Parks and State Trail property acquisitions and related transactions	Pending	\$500,000
			State Sub Total	\$500,000
Non-State				
			Non State Sub Total	-
			Funds Total	\$500,000

Acquisition and Restoration

Parcel List

Name	County	Site Significance	Activity	Acres	Miles	Estimated Cost	Type of Landowner	Easement or Title Holder	Status of Work
Arrowhead	St. Louis	Arrowhead State Trail	Easement - Other	3	0.5	\$2,500	Private	Minnesota Department of Natural Resources	Has Not Begun
Blazing Star	Freeborn	Blazing Star State Trail	Fee Title	3	0.25	\$18,000	Private	Minnesota Department of Natural Resources	Has Not Begun
Casey Jones	Redwood	Casey Jones State Trail	Fee Title	6	0.5	\$36,000	Private	Minnesota Department of Natural Resources	Has Not Begun
Casey Jones	Pipestone	Casey Jones State Trail	Fee Title	6	0.5	\$36,000	Private	Minnesota Department of Natural Resources	Has Not Begun
Crow Wing	Cass	Crow Wing State Park	Fee Title	5	-	\$500,000	Private	Minnesota Department of Natural Resources	Has Not Begun
Cuyuna Lakes	Crow Wing	Cuyuna Lakes State Trail	Fee Title	1	0.1	\$6,000	Private	Minnesota Department of Natural Resources	Has Not Begun
Gooseberry Falls State Park	Lake	Gooseberry Falls State Park	Fee Title	16.75	-	\$1,400,000	Private	Minnesota Department of Natural Resources	Has Not Begun
Lake Maria	Wright	Lake Maria State Park	Fee Title	31.62	-	\$325,000	Private	Minnesota Department of Natural Resources	Has Not Begun
Mill Towns	Rice	Mill Towns State Trail	Easement - Other	19	6	\$230,000	Private	Minnesota Department of Natural Resources	Has Not Begun

Minnesota Valley	Scott	Minnesota Valley State Recreation Area	Fee Title	800	-	\$3,300,000	Private	Minnesota Department of Natural Resources	Has Not Begun
Taconite	St. Louis	Taconite State Trail	Fee Title	1.5	0.25	\$2,500	Private	Minnesota Department of Natural Resources	Has Not Begun
William O'Brien	Washington	William O'Brien State Park	Fee Title	6	-	\$355,000	Private	Minnesota Department of Natural Resources	Has Not Begun
Totals				898.87	8.1	\$6,211,000			

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 Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (MnDNR) has identified and ranked each parcel within legislatively defined boundaries and alignments for State Parks, State Recreation Areas, and State Trails. The MnDNR maintains, reviews and annually updates a general statewide priority list of willing sellers. Potential projects are analyzed using investment criteria established in the DNR Parks and Trails System Plan.

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.

MNDNR Parks and Trail Division Park and Trail Management Plans

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 scope and nature of restoration of acquire parcels will be based upon the nature of the potential use. All resource management plans for individual parks and trails facilities are maintained by the Division's Resource Management Program. Long term maintenance and management of the selected properties will be assumed by the existing Parks and Trails Division Facility Managers and Staff.

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.

For each property purchased will be subject to County Board Approval per DNR administrative direction.

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.

Confirmed.

Easement (Other) 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 Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (MnDNR) has identified and ranked each parcel within legislatively defined boundaries and alignments for State Trails. The MnDNR maintains, reviews and annually updates a general statewide priority list of willing sellers. Potential projects are analyzed using investment criteria established in the DNR Parks and Trails System Plan.

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.

MNDNR Parks and Trail Division Park and Trail Management Plans

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 scope and nature of restoration of acquire parcels will be based upon the nature of the potential use. All resource management plans for individual parks and trails facilities are maintained by the Division's Resource Management Program. Long term maintenance and management of the selected properties will be assumed by the existing Parks and Trails Division Facility Managers and Staff.

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.

For each property purchased will be subject to County Board Approval per DNR administrative direction.

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.

Confirmed.

Restoration

1. Provide a statement confirming that all restoration activities completed with these funds will occur on land permanently protected by a conservation easement or public ownership.

All acquisition restoration activities being paid with by LCCMR funds will be on lands that are permanently protected by a conservation easement or public ownership.

2. Summarize the components and expected outcomes of restoration and management plans for the parcels to be restored by your organization, how these plans are kept on file by your organization, and overall strategies for long-term plan implementation.

The scope and nature of restoration of acquire parcels will be based upon the nature of the potential use. All resource management plans for individual parks and trails facilities are maintained by the Division's Resource Management Program. Long term maintenance and management of the selected properties will be assumed by the existing Parks and Trails Division Facility Managers and Staff.

3. Describe how restoration efforts will utilize and follow the Board of Soil and Water Resources "Native Vegetation Establishment and Enhancement Guidelines" in order to ensure ecological integrity and pollinator enhancement.

The DNR follows an operational order 124, Plant Material Standards for Native Plant Community Restoration. Which mirrors or exceeds Board of Soil and Water Resources guidance.

4. Describe how the long-term maintenance and management needs of the parcel being restored with these funds will be met and financed into the future.

The Division's Resource Management Program has long-term maintenance and management plans that are implemented through annual workplans. Funding of the long-term maintenance and management come through a variety of different funding sources such as general, working capital, legacy and various grant funds.

5. Describe how consideration will be given to contracting with Conservation Corps of Minnesota for any restoration activities.

The Division of Parks and Trails utilizes an appropriation that the legislation has designated for the use of Conservation Corps of Minnesota. The majority of the funds that are allocated to the Division are used for Resource Management.

6. Provide a statement indicating that evaluations will be completed on parcels where activities were implemented both 1) initially after activity completion and 2) three years later as a follow-up. Evaluations should analyze improvements to the parcel and whether goals have been met, identify any problems with the implementation, and identify any findings that can be used to improve implementation of future restoration efforts at the site or elsewhere.

Evaluations will be completed by professional Resource Staff managed by the Division of Parks and Trails.

Attachments

Required Attachments

Map

File: [ae93968d-46e.pdf](#)

Alternate Text for Map

Attached is a map of that contains the proposed acquisition projects statewide. There are zoomed in maps of the State Park and State Recreation Area boundaries with the proposed acquisition area. The trails map shows the location of where the State Trails projects would take place....

Administrative Use

Does your project include restoration or acquisition of land rights?

Yes: Restoration, Easement (Other) Acquisition, Fee Acquisition,

Does your project have potential for royalties, copyrights, patents, or sale of products and assets?

No

Do you understand and acknowledge IP and revenue-return and sharing requirements in 116P.10?

N/A

Do you wish to request reinvestment of any revenues into your project instead of returning revenue to the ENRTF?

N/A

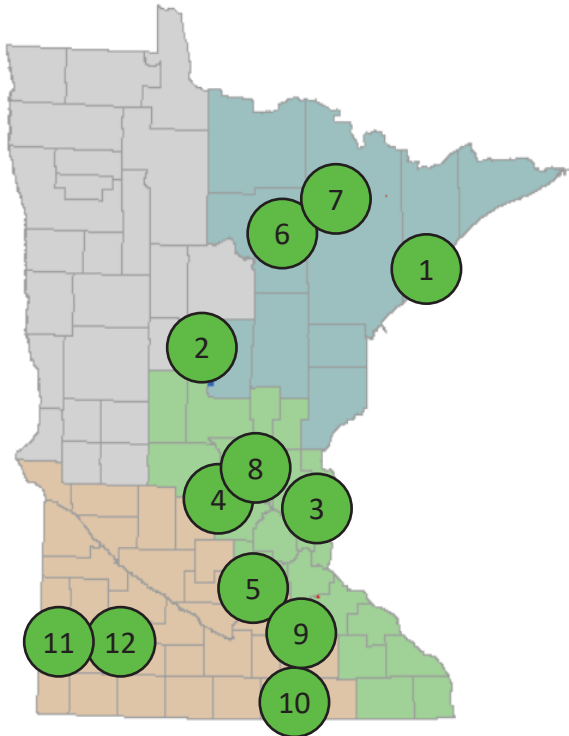
Does your project include original, hypothesis-driven research?

No

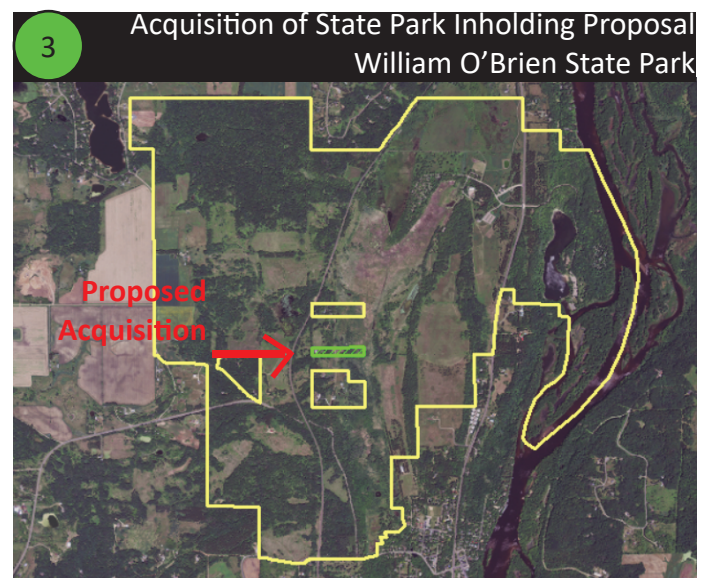
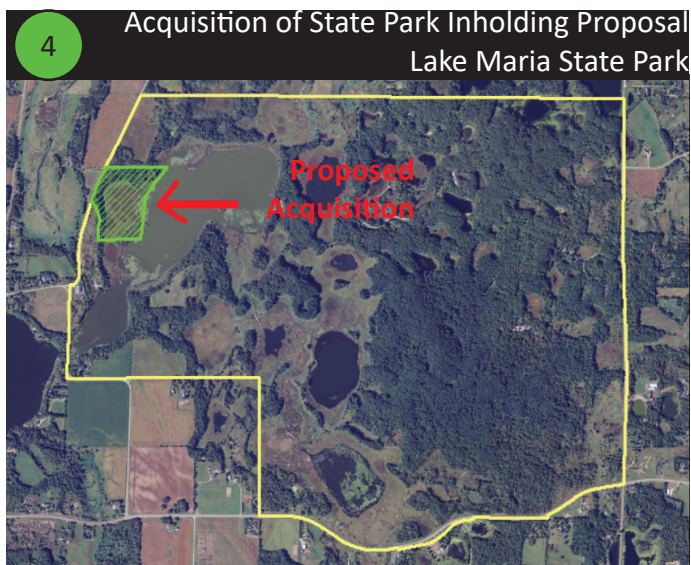
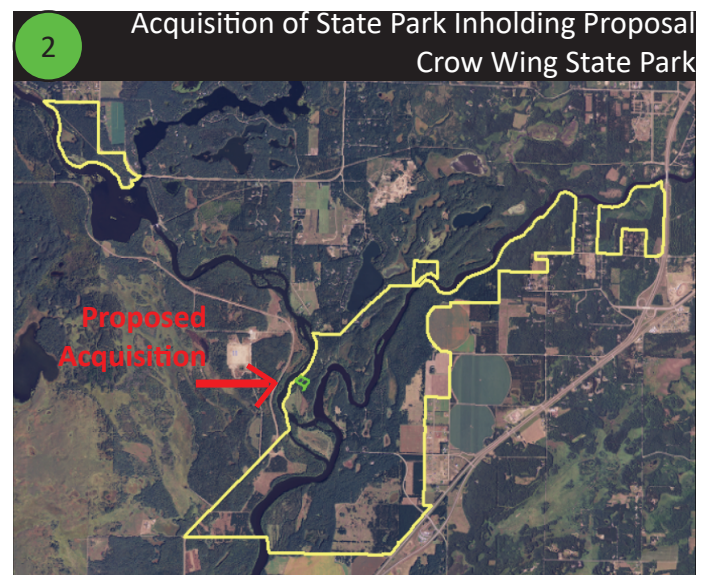
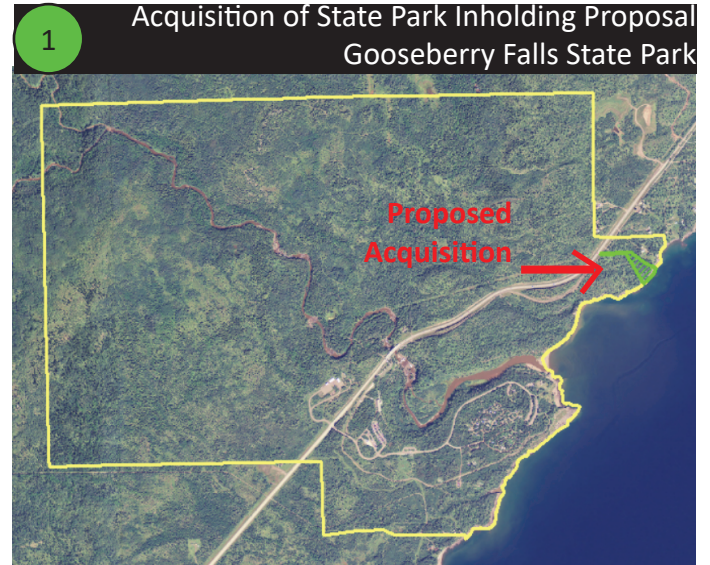
Does the organization have a fiscal agent for this project?

No

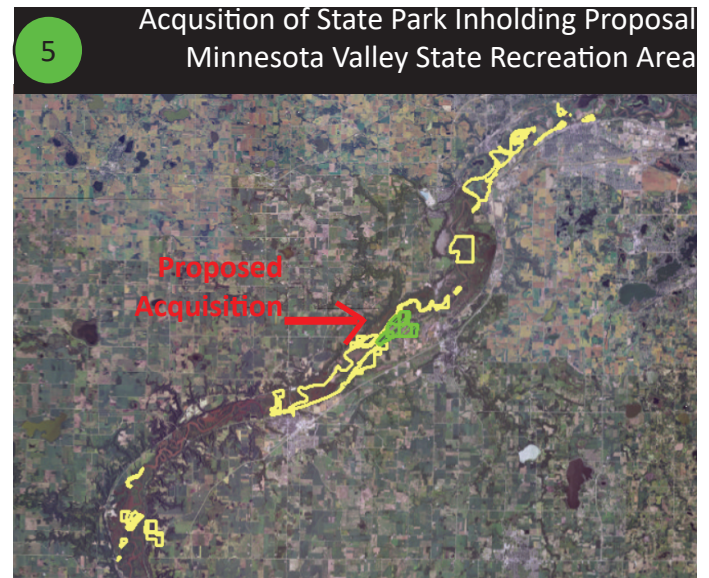
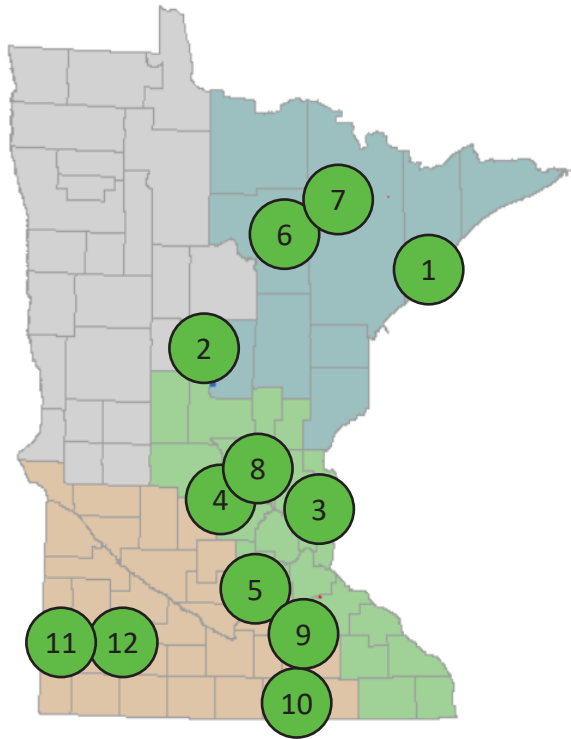
Acquisition of State Park and Trail In-holdings Proposal



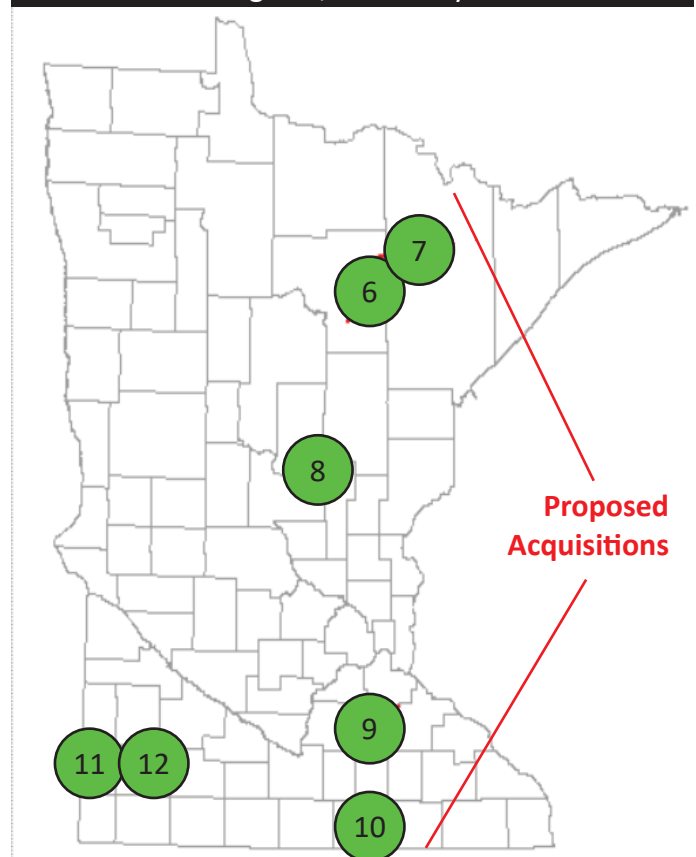
Map Number	Program	Site Significance	Approximate Acres
1	Park	Gooseberry State Park	16.75
2	Park	Crow Wings State Park	5
3	Park	William O'Brien State Park	6
4	Park	Lake Maria State Park	31.62



Continued Acquisition of State Park and Trail In-holdings Proposal



Acquisition of State Trail Inholding Proposal
Arrowhead, Taconite, Cuyuna Lakes, Mill Towns,
Blazing Star, and Casey Jones State Trails



Map Number	Program	Site Significance	Approximate Acres
5	SRA	Minnesota Valley State Recreation Area	800
6	Trail	Arrowhead State Trail	3
7	Trail	Taconite State Trail	1.5
8	Trail	Cuyuna Lakes State Trails	1
9	Trail	Mill Towns State Trail	19
10	Trail	Blazing Star State Trail	3
11	Trail	Casey Jones State Trail	6
12	Trail	Casey Jones State Trail	6

