



## Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund

### 2023 Request for Proposal

#### General Information

**Proposal ID:** 2023-231

**Proposal Title:** Redhead Mountain Bike Park

#### Project Manager Information

**Name:** Donna Johnson

**Organization:** Minnesota Discovery Center

**Office Telephone:** (218) 254-1220

**Email:** donna.johnson@mndiscoverycenter.com

#### Project Basic Information

**Project Summary:** The Redhead Mountain Bike Park will add an additional 14 miles of trail and accommodations to Redhead Mountain Bike Trail System at the Minnesota Discovery Center in Chisholm, Minnesota.

**Funds Requested:** \$1,977,000

**Proposed Project Completion:** December 31, 2023

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

#### Project Location

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

Region(s): NE

**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.**

Minnesota Discovery Center in northern Minnesota recently became the trailhead of the states newest multi-use public trail system, Redhead Mountain Bike Park. Carved from the walls of several abandoned mine pits adjacent to MDC's historic 660-acre campus, Redhead offers 25-miles of easily accessible picturesque trails that circumnavigate and descend into water-filled iron ore mine pits and are free to the public 7-days a week. Redhead compliments four existing recreational amenities, the Mesabi Trail, Giants Ridge, Tioga, and Cuyuna making northern Minnesota perfectly situated to become an international destination for mountain bikers, hikers, and outdoor enthusiasts of all ages and skill levels.

With the first phase (\$1.77M) of the park build (most difficult trails built first) complete – a partnership between MDC, City of Chisholm, and Iron Range Off-Road Cyclists – and with outdoor related activities rapidly growing in Minnesota, Redhead is poised for continued growth and recreational expansion. Our mission is to build out the Redhead to its full potential, enhancing user experience by adding trail and accommodations making Redhead a premier recreational destination that compliments existing state investments and offers a unique and historic experience people of all capabilities can enjoy, including those with disabilities.

### **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.**

With the most difficult 25-miles of trails complete, we seek funds to capitalize on the opportunity to build out Redhead to its full potential - constructing 14 more miles of already flagged multi-use backcountry trail that will be better suited to accommodate beginner-expert level and family friendly mountain biking, adaptive cycling, hiking, side by side racing, and many other uses that require wider trail corridors. Moreover, we seek to enhance user experience and accessibility along new and existing trails by adding multi-use handicap accessible structural and recreational amenities that will better serve our thousands of visitors and continue to fuel the growth of Redhead, creating a world-class recreational destination.

Funds would construct 14-miles of already flagged multi-use trail and enhance user experience along existing and new trail by adding multi-use/handicap accessible structural and recreational amenities such as a circular paved pump/warm up track (a pump track uses gravity and momentum to aid user around track/wheelchair accessible/kid friendly), an educational mining-themed circular dirt skills course, changing stations, shade shacks, recreating areas, restroom facilities and other enhancements such as informational signage kiosks, and additional family/kid/handicap accessible amenities to accommodate a wider array of prospective trail users.

### **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?**

Redhead promotes healthy lifestyles and connects bikers, hikers, and outdoor enthusiasts with the outdoors and the history of the Iron Range. These upgrades will better serve and enhance the experience of the 15,000+ annual visitors (this number continues to grow), and to better utilize Redheads unique setting, trails, and MDC's historic and cultural 660-acre campus. By expanding Redhead accommodations, we will connect more people to MN history, mine-land reclamation, and the outdoors and further repurposes this iconic site into a world class biking and hiking experience.

## Activities and Milestones

### Activity 1: Paved Pump TrackSkills Course, and Trail Amenities

**Activity Budget:** \$591,000

**Activity Description:**

The Redhead Mountain Bike Trail system has limited capacity for experiences that align with the skill and fitness of new trail enthusiasts and those using adaptive bikes, wheelchairs, or youth riders. The Redhead system offers the chance to provide unique opportunities for trail-based exploration and for individuals to build the skills, confidence, and fitness to explore more challenging trails at Redhead and elsewhere.

This activity will enhance the existing hands-on learning and interpretive environment of the Minnesota Discovery Center and Redhead park by adding active kid and beginner-friendly elements. We propose the addition of an asphalt pump track, and a beginner single track loop, all integrated into the existing trail system. We will also create Discovery Center/Redhead Trailhead and event staging improvements that include bike parking, fencing, trail access, drinking water, kiosk, start/finish area, and tot-track. We would also add trail improvements including drinking water, sitting areas, restroom facilities, information kiosk, a shade shack, changing stations, and accessibility enhancements throughout the system.

**Activity Milestones:**

Description	Completion Date
Completion of multi-use skills and warm up course.	August 31, 2023
Completion of multi-use handicap accessible paved pump track.	August 31, 2023
Completion of construction and implementation of user enhancement amenities.	October 31, 2023

### Activity 2: Trail Construction

**Activity Budget:** \$1,386,000

**Activity Description:**

Taking full advantage of the Redhead landscape, this activity will implement the complete development of the designed trail system that will offer longer distance trails, more challenging trail experiences, as well as more inclusive terrain features for individuals with disabilities, families, and destination-oriented visitors;-additions that will stretch visitation to multiple days. These 14-miles of trail system additions will add options to the Redhead experience, including the longest backcountry loop, a circumnavigation of almost 20-miles around the landscape (linking trails 31, 33, 41, 42, 50, 46, and 32 to the loop around the mining pits) and a number of beginner through expert gravity-oriented trails (44, 46, and 47/50) down the largest tailings pile on the Redhead property. Improvements will also include enhanced signage, safety information, and supporting structures and amenities along the trail. Redhead secured its first official race in October of 2021 in collaboration with the Minnesota High School Mountain Bike League and we anticipate, in just 2-days, 3,000 people and \$500k in economic spending. The additional 14-miles and amenities will allow us to schedule more of these types of races, enhance user experience, and better accommodate trail users here at Redhead Mountain Bike Park.

**Activity Milestones:**

Description	Completion Date
Project Planning & Trail Design	December 31, 2022
Trail build-out (14 miles)	October 31, 2023

## Project Partners and Collaborators

Name	Organization	Role	Receiving Funds
Donna Johnson	Minnesota Discovery Center	Executive Director of Minnesota Discovery Center and project manager.	Yes
Stephanie Skraba	City of Chisholm, Minnesota	Economic Development Coordinator, Fiscal Agent	Yes
Jordan Metsa	Minnesota Discovery Center	Fund Development & Marketing Coordinator at the Minnesota Discovery Center and Assistant Project Manager	Yes
Benji Neff	Iron Range Off-Road Cyclists (IROC)	President of IROC, a volunteer mountain bike club that provides regular trail maintenance and consulting for trail system.	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?**

The long-term strategy for Redhead is to build-out at least 45-miles of trail for the system. We will continue to seek eligible grants to complete the project. We will look for future funding opportunities to continue to maintain the trail system.

## Project Manager and Organization Qualifications

**Project Manager Name:** Donna Johnson

**Job Title:** Executive Director

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

The overall project manager will be the Minnesota Discover Center Board of Directors and staff in cooperation with the City of Chisholm and Iron Range Off-Road Cyclists (IROC). Minnesota Discovery Center staff includes Donna Johnson, Executive Director, and Jordan Metsa, Fund Development & Marketing Coordinator. Additional project management and oversight will come from the consulting architect/engineering team. All of the entities have been involved in the planning and development of this project since its beginning.

**Organization:** Minnesota Discovery Center

**Organization Description:**

The Minnesota Discovery Center is a non-profit institution and the state's largest museum complex outside of the Twin Cities metro area. Comprised of a museum, research center, and mountain bike park, Minnesota Discovery Center tells the story of the Iron Range, Minnesota and our Nation, through exhibits, interpretation, programming, research materials and now through the outdoors with the Redhead Mountain Bike trail system.

The Minnesota Discovery Center is home to the new, world class Redhead Mountain Bike trail. The first 30.3 miles of the trails opened in 2020. Redhead is a cooperative effort between Iron Range Off-Road Cyclists, the City of Chisholm, and the Minnesota Discovery Center. The trail system weaves its way through the forests, reclaimed mine land and along the banks of former mine pits that are now beautiful lakes. The park has been described as the "Grand Canyon of the North" — with mountain bike trails around its perimeter. The park itself is built on 1,225-acres of former Iron Range mine land

and is one of the most scenic and unequaled mountain bike park in the Midwest. Redhead is located adjacent to MDC - an events center that assists in hosting biking events, making it unique.

## Budget Summary

Category / Name	Subcategory or Type	Description	Purpose	Gen. Ineligible	% Benefits	# FTE	Classified Staff?	\$ Amount
<b>Personnel</b>								
							<b>Sub Total</b>	-
<b>Contracts and Services</b>								
TBD	Professional or Technical Service Contract	Project planning, engineering, trail design.				-		\$21,000
TBD	Sub award	Trail construction, pumptrack construction, skills area and trailhead construction.				0		\$1,893,500
TBD	Professional or Technical Service Contract	Construction management and environmental compliance.				-		\$62,500
							<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>\$1,977,000</b>
<b>Equipment, Tools, and Supplies</b>								
							<b>Sub Total</b>	-
<b>Capital Expenditures</b>								
							<b>Sub Total</b>	-
<b>Acquisitions and Stewardship</b>								
							<b>Sub Total</b>	-
<b>Travel In Minnesota</b>								
							<b>Sub Total</b>	-

<b>Travel Outside Minnesota</b>								
							<b>Sub Total</b>	-
<b>Printing and Publication</b>								
							<b>Sub Total</b>	-
<b>Other Expenses</b>								
							<b>Sub Total</b>	-
							<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>\$1,977,000</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
State				
			State Sub Total	-
Non-State				
			Non State Sub Total	-
			Funds Total	-

## Attachments

### Required Attachments

#### *Visual Component*

File: [f0723554-db6.pdf](#)

#### *Alternate Text for Visual Component*

Redhead Map...

#### *Financial Capacity*

File: [1072fbbc-19e.pdf](#)

#### *Board Resolution or Letter*

Title	File
IRS Determination Letter	<a href="#">ad296aac-792.pdf</a>
W9	<a href="#">e0cb5194-66c.pdf</a>
MN Discovery Center Board Resolution	<a href="#">623f984c-fde.pdf</a>

### Optional Attachments

#### *Support Letter or Other*

Title	File
Articles of Incorporation	<a href="#">78f9673c-af4.pdf</a>
Board of Directors	<a href="#">f16471a0-8f3.pdf</a>
Chisholm Council Resolution of Support	<a href="#">06a5de61-60e.pdf</a>
Chisholm Mayor Champa Letter of Support	<a href="#">a64d08bf-6bf.pdf</a>
IROC Letter of Support	<a href="#">f1814af7-376.pdf</a>
Chamber Letter of Support	<a href="#">bcc70fec-a12.pdf</a>
St. Louis County Letter of Support	<a href="#">d1555272-4c8.pdf</a>
Note in Lieu of Updated Board Resolution	<a href="#">1358e721-527.pdf</a>

## Administrative Use

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

No

**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?**

Yes, City of Chisholm



