



Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund

2024 Request for Proposal

General Information

Proposal ID: 2024-026

Proposal Title: PLSS Restoration T58R13

Project Manager Information

Name: Preston Dowell

Organization: St. Louis County

Office Telephone: (218) 742-9824

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Project Basic Information

Project Summary: Restore and certify monuments of the Public Land Survey System. Collect geodetic coordinate values in order to improve foundational Geographic Information System (GIS) data.

Funds Requested: \$218,000

Proposed Project Completion: July 31, 2026

LCCMR Funding Category: Foundational Natural Resource Data and Information (A)

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?

Region(s): NE

When will the work impact occur?

During the Project and In the Future

Narrative

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

The Public Land Survey (PLS) was performed in Minnesota from 1847 to 1905. Most of these PLS corners were originally wooden posts. The Government Land Office (GLO) originally set these corners and gave the power of maintaining them to the State. The State gave that responsibility to the Counties. St. Louis County estimates that 50% of the PLS corners in the county have been certified with geodetic coordinates determined.

These corners affect every land owner in the state. PLS monuments are necessary to accurately depict land ownership and interest in real property, which has impacts on land transfers, parcel subdivisions, property taxation, hunting and mineral rights and granting of easements. The environmental or land tie to this proposal is clear in that all resources, their use and delineation, require some description related to the corners of the PLSS. With the loss of one ¼ section corner every parcel of land within two sections are affected, the loss of one section corner has the same adverse effect in four sections.

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.

Restore and certify the corners of the PLS in Township 58N, Range 13 West of the 4th Principal Meridian. By certifying and collecting highly accurate geodetic coordinates on these monuments, we will preserve their position and also allow them to be utilized in GIS dataset to improve the accuracy of related GIS data.

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 MN DNR, St. Louis County Land and Minerals Division and the USFS rely on these corner positions to manage forest and state school trust lands, mark timber harvest and manage mineral royalties.

Activities and Milestones

Activity 1: Records Research

Activity Budget: \$66,100

Activity Description:

PLSS Remonumentation requires extensive research prior to commencing with field work. The surveyor will collect various records and compile them into preliminary corner certificates in order to determine search areas and complete preliminary analysis. . By thoroughly examining the records, the prudent surveyor can be confident that the proper location of the corner has been monumented.

Activity Milestones:

Description	Approximate Completion Date
Preliminary Research	October 31, 2024
Preliminary corner certificates	February 28, 2025

Activity 2: Field search and monumentation

Activity Budget: \$67,300

Activity Description:

A thorough field search for corner evidence and final monumentation of the PLSS position. The goal is to find the position of the original monument that the GLO surveyor set.

Field reconnaissance of the area using the record research data of the Public Land Survey methods is necessary in order to narrow the search area for exploring the area for evidence. Much reconnaissance can be completed utilizing GIS maps and imagery overlays, but it cannot replace a site visit. Checks to nearby natural feature calls or other known information can often reveal alternate positions to consider in the field.

A retracement survey is made in order to locate existing monuments, occupation lines, possible corner locations and natural feature calls from PLSS field notes and historical corner positions which were identified in the research process.

Activity Milestones:

Description	Approximate Completion Date
Verify known corners	February 28, 2025
Initial Search for unknown corners	November 30, 2025
Final determination and monumentation	March 31, 2026

Activity 3: Corner Certification

Activity Budget: \$37,600

Activity Description:

A Certificate of Location shall be prepared and filed for each PLSS corner recovered and/or monumented according to Minnesota Statutes 381.12. This certificate shall be a complete document relating to the location, monumentation, perpetuation and history of a corner. The certificates will be recorded in the St. Louis County Records office.

Activity Milestones:

Description	Approximate Completion Date
Preliminary Certificates submitted for review to County Surveyor	May 31, 2026
Final certificates recorded at the St. Louis County Recorders office	July 31, 2026

Activity 4: Certificate of Survey

Activity Budget: \$18,800

Activity Description:

A certificate of survey will be prepared that shows the extent of the project. The survey will be recorded in the county recorders office. This survey ensures all stakeholders will be able to see the work completed by searching the public record.

Activity Milestones:

Description	Approximate Completion Date
Preliminary Certificate submitted to the county surveyor	June 30, 2026
Final certificaste of survey recorded in the County Recorders office	July 31, 2026

Activity 5: Project management and inspection

Activity Budget: \$28,200

Activity Description:

The St. Louis County Surveyors office will be responsible for managing the project in the best interests of the county constituents. They will produce an RFP for these services and will collaborate with the contractor to ensure that the project is completed correctly and within the project parameters.

Activity Milestones:

Description	Approximate Completion Date
Contract RFP and Award	July 31, 2024
Review preliminary corner certificates	May 31, 2025
Field inspections and QA/QC	July 31, 2025
Review final corner certifcates	June 30, 2026
Review final certificate of survey	July 31, 2026

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?

Once certified and recorded, the corner positions will be added to the St. Louis County GIS database and other foundational data will be able to be updated. Any funding needed for long term maintenance of the corners will be provided by St. Louis County. In the future, St. Louis County intends to request additional funds through the LCCMR to restore PLS corners in other areas of the county.

Project Manager and Organization Qualifications

Project Manager Name: Preston Dowell

Job Title: Deputy County Surveyor

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

Supervisor of the St. Louis County Land Survey Divisions Virginia Office. Manages office, staff, budget and for the north half of the counties Public Land Survey System Restoration program. Manages PLSS Restoration contracts similar to the proposed project. Facilitates updates to county foundational GIS data by integrating high accuracy PLSS data into GIS datasets.

Organization: St. Louis County

Organization Description:

County government

Budget Summary

Category / Name	Subcategory or Type	Description	Purpose	Gen. Ineligible	% Benefits	# FTE	Classified Staff?	\$ Amount
Personnel								
Professional Surveyor		Project Manager			68.42%	1		\$10,450
Survey Technician		Project support, field office review			68.42%	4		\$17,750
							Sub Total	\$28,200
Contracts and Services								
To Be Determined	Professional or Technical Service Contract	Professional Land Surveyor contracted to complete the remonumentation work				8		\$188,300
							Sub Total	\$188,300
Equipment, Tools, and Supplies								
	Tools and Supplies	Bearing Tree Tags	4 BT tags per corner to aid in future restoration					\$1,500
							Sub Total	\$1,500
Capital Expenditures								
							Sub Total	-
Acquisitions and Stewardship								
							Sub Total	-
Travel In Minnesota								
							Sub Total	-

Travel Outside Minnesota								
							Sub Total	-
Printing and Publication								
							Sub Total	-
Other Expenses								
							Sub Total	-
							Grand Total	\$218,000

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	-

Attachments

Required Attachments

Visual Component

File: [9cea762b-583.pdf](#)

Alternate Text for Visual Component

A map depicting the project area in Township 58 North Range 13 West of the 4th Principal Meridian...

Board Resolution or Letter

Title	File
Board Resolution	beafdbbe-f33.pdf

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, St. Louis County

Does your project include the design, construction, or renovation of a building, trail, campground, or other capital asset costing \$10,000 or more?

No

Do you propose using an appropriation from the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund to conduct a project that provides children's services, as defined in Minnesota Statutes section 299C.61 Subd.7?

No