



# Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund

## 2024 Request for Proposal

### General Information

**Proposal ID:** 2024-277

**Proposal Title:** Growing the Minnesota Bison Conservation Herd

### Project Manager Information

**Name:** Edward Quinn

**Organization:** MN DNR - State Parks and Trails Division

**Office Telephone:** (651) 259-5594

**Email:** edward.quinn@state.mn.us

### Project Basic Information

**Project Summary:** Design and construct fencing and handling facility needed to reintroduce bison to Camden State Park as part of preserving and interpreting the population and genome of American Plains bison.

**Funds Requested:** \$2,415,000

**Proposed Project Completion:** October 31, 2029

**LCCMR Funding Category:** Methods to Protect, Restore, and Enhance Land, Water, and Habitat (F)

### Project Location

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

Region(s): SW

**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 seeks to aid in preserving the population and genome of American Plains bison. The International Union for the Conservation of Nature classifies bison as Near-Threatened and Critically Depleted due to the small number (< 32,000 in N. America) managed to preserve the species in the public interest. Existing threats include genetic manipulation of commercial herds for marketable traits, habitat loss, cattle gene introgression & small population effects. The Minnesota Bison Conservation Herd (MBCH) was established in 2012 and currently consists of four partners: MN Dept. of Natural Resources, the MN Zoo, Dakota County Parks and Olmsted County Parks. The current meta-population of the MBCH is 156 bison virtually free of cattle genes. A primary goal of the MBCH is to reach a sustaining population of at least 500 animals to ensure the genetic viability of the herd for the long term and to. Additional goals of the MBCH include improving prairie quality through bison reintroductions, providing opportunities for individuals to learn about bison, prairies and peoples and incorporating other entities like federal and tribal governments and private conservation organizations into this effort.

### **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.**

- We are seeking funding to establish the infrastructure needed to re-introduce bison to Camden State Park and educate visitors and the public about bison, prairies and how we as people interact with them over time.
- We expect this site to provide habitat for approximately 85 bison which would bring the MBCH to nearly 50% of the minimum population goal needed.
- Interest in the MBCH has grown substantially in recent years among tribal governments, counties, private conservation organizations and others that will be able to help further address the need for additional herd size.
- As we move closer to our population goal, we will be able to play a role in assisting with North American and national bison conservation efforts such as the recently announced Dept. of Interior Sec. Order 3410 Restoration of American Bison and Prairie Grasslands.
- Past experience with the bison reintroduction at Minneopa State Park and elsewhere indicates the need for a longer time horizon (5 years) than typical for LCCMR projects in order to accomplish the review, design and construction of infrastructure elements needed for the reintroduction.

### **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?**

- This project helps the Dept. of Natural Resources meet part of its statutory direction for state parks which is to reintroduce desirable species (MS 86A.05 subd. 2c).
- Design, site preparation and installation of the infrastructure necessary to provide a range and handling facility approximately 85 bison on > 500 acres of prairie landscape.
- Improve the quality of Camden's prairie, in part through bison actions such as grazing and wallowing.
- Help visitors and the public learn about bison, prairies and how we as people interact with them over time.

## Activities and Milestones

**Activity 1: Design, site preparation and installation of the infrastructure necessary to provide a range and handling facility and interpretive exhibits.**

**Activity Budget:** \$2,415,000

**Activity Description:**

Conduct the natural and cultural resource reviews needed to inform the location and placement of the fencing and handling facility. Complete designs for fencing, handling facility and other infrastructure. Conduct site preparation activities. Install the fencing, handling and infrastructure. Design, construct and install interpretive and safety signage and exhibits. Reintroduce bison to the site.

**Activity Milestones:**

Description	Approximate Completion Date
Conduct pre-development natural and cultural resource review	December 31, 2024
Fence alignment and handling facility location identified based on reviews and operational, interpretive needs.	December 31, 2024
2. Develop plans for fencing and handling facility.	December 31, 2025
Prepare bid specifications, review proposals, select fencing contractor	February 28, 2026
Prepare bid specifications, review proposals, select contractor for handling facility.	February 28, 2027
Complete installation/construction of fence.	December 31, 2027
Implement start-up operational tasks like clearing fence alignment and trail relocation, fence monitoring, repair, fence	December 31, 2028
Implement resource management activities to prepare site and improve prairie habitat. Conduct forage analysis.	June 30, 2029
Complete construction of handling facility.	June 30, 2029
Reintroduce bison to Camden State Park following animal management days	October 31, 2029

## Project Partners and Collaborators

Name	Organization	Role	Receiving Funds
Seth Stapleton, Dr. Annie Rivas	Minnesota Zoo	Facility design, program of veterinary care	No
Tom Lewanski	Dakota County Parks	Facility design	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?**

Natural/cultural resource reviews will be conducted by DNR resource specialists and archaeologists from the MN Historical Society contracted to DNR. Design, site preparation and installation of necessary infrastructure will be accomplished by DNR development and engineering staff working with contractors knowledgeable in handling facility design. DNR interpretive staff will design interpretive exhibits and coordinate with exhibit firms to construct. On-going costs to maintain the Camden bison herd are expected to be like those necessary for the Blue Mounds and Minneopa state parks herds. Those will come from the General Fund, Legacy and other appropriate sources available.

## Other ENRTF Appropriations Awarded in the Last Six Years

Name	Appropriation	Amount Awarded
Restoring Forests in Minnesota State Parks	M.L. 2018, Chp. 214, Art. 4, Sec. 2, Subd. 08e	\$250,000
Saving Endangered Pollinators through Data-Driven Prairie Restoration	M.L. 2019, First Special Session, Chp. 4, Art. 2, Sec. 2, Subd. 08a	\$800,000
Enhancing Bat Recovery By Optimizing Artificial Roost Structures	M.L. 2021, First Special Session, Chp. 6, Art. 5, Sec. 2, Subd. 03m	\$190,000

## Project Manager and Organization Qualifications

**Project Manager Name:** Edward Quinn

**Job Title:** Natural Resource Program Supervisor

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

Mr. Quinn has a BS in Fish and Wildlife from Michigan State University and an MS in Ecology from the University of Minnesota. He is a Certified Wildlife Biologist thru The Wildlife Society the professional association of wildlife biologists and managers. He has over 30 years' experience managing wildlife and natural resources in Ohio, Vermont and the last 20 in Minnesota. He has successfully managed similar LCCMR projects such as the Reintroduction and Interpretation of Bison in Minnesota State Parks (M.L. 2015, Chp. 76, Sec. 2, Subd. 03h) and State Parks for Monarchs and other Native Pollinators (M.L. 2017, Chp. 96, Sec. 2, Subd. 08d as extended by M.L. 2021, First Special Session, Chp. 6, Art. 6, Sec. 2, Subd. 18).

**Organization:** MN DNR - State Parks and Trails Division

**Organization Description:**

The mission of the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is to work with Minnesotans to conserve and manage the state's natural resources, to provide outdoor recreation opportunities, and to provide for commercial uses of natural resources in a way that creates a sustainable quality of life. Specifically, state parks are to preserve and

perpetuate pre-European settlement natural features and other significant, natural, scenic, scientific, and historic features present as well as maintain a balance of plant and animal life and reintroduce desirable species once present that are now missing.

## Budget Summary

Category / Name	Subcategory or Type	Description	Purpose	Gen. Ineligible	% Benefits	# FTE	Classified Staff?	\$ Amount
<b>Personnel</b>								
Laborer General		Will assist with fence alignment clearing, trail relocation, fence monitoring and repair and resource management efforts needed for site prep and prairie management.			30%	1.2		\$55,800
							<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>\$55,800</b>
<b>Contracts and Services</b>								
MN Historical Society	Professional or Technical Service Contract	Ensure that infrastructure installation complies with US/MN law regarding protection of cultural resources.				0.23		\$40,000
MNDNR Operations Services Division	Internal services or fees (uncommon)	Provide design and contract administration services for fencing, handling facility, well, waterer and storage building				1.9		\$400,000
Fence Contractor	Professional or Technical Service Contract	Install approximately 7.7 miles of fence, with multiple gates encircling the Camden bison range.				1		\$799,983
Contractor for Handling Facility	Professional or Technical Service Contract	Construct a handling facility incorporating handler safety and the most current humane livestock handling principles and handler safety into all aspects of the facility. The facility will be sized to accommodate about 100 animals				1		\$520,000
Contractor for Storage building	Professional or Technical Service Contract	Construct a small (30'x40') storage building.				0.3		\$350,000
Well Driller	Professional or Technical Service Contract	Drill a well and install the waterer and associated plumbing and electric components to provide water inside the handling facility				0.3		\$150,000
Exhibit Contractor	Professional or Technical	Design and construct interpretive and safety signs and exhibits.				0.3		\$60,000

	Service Contract							
							<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>\$2,319,983</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>								
		Direct and Necessary Costs	Direct and necessary expenses: HR Support (~\$2,202), Safety Support (~\$458), Financial Support (~\$27,671), Communications Support (~\$2,123), IT Support (\$5,728), Planning Support (~1,036) necessary to accomplish funded project.					\$39,217
							<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>\$39,217</b>

							<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>\$2,415,000</b>
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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	General Fund and Parks & Trails Legacy	Resource Review and project planning, site preparation	Secured	\$100,000
			<b>State Sub Total</b>	<b>\$100,000</b>
<b>Non-State</b>				
			<b>Non State Sub Total</b>	-
			<b>Funds Total</b>	<b>\$100,000</b>

## Attachments

### Required Attachments

#### *Visual Component*

File: [c8c37358-318.docx](#)

#### *Alternate Text for Visual Component*

The graphic shows the location of the reintroduction site, Camden state park in Minnesota, a Camden state park map and the approximate location of the bison range in the park....

### Optional Attachments

#### *Support Letter, Photos, Media, Other*

Title	File
Support Letter from Minnesota Zoo	<a href="#">dd065278-35e.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?**

No

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

Yes

**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

