



Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund

2026 Request for Proposal

General Information

Proposal ID: 2026-288

Proposal Title: Tettegouche State Park Entrance Bridge Replacement

Project Manager Information

Name: Kent Skaar

Organization: MN DNR - State Parks and Trails Division

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Project Basic Information

Project Summary: This project proposes the replacement of the Tettegouche State Park / Baptism River Bridge, a steel truss bridge originally constructed in 1923.

ENRTF Funds Requested: \$8,625,000

Proposed Project Completion: June 30, 2030

LCCMR Funding Category: Education and Outdoor Recreation (C)

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 and In the Future

Narrative

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

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (MNDNR) is legislatively authorized under MS 85.012 to establish, develop, maintain, and operate State Parks as specifically identified. As broadly defined by MS 85.012, the authorized State Park System is comprised of 67 individual State Parks. This project proposes the removal and replacement of a significant, vehicle and trail bridge located within the boundaries of Tettegouche State Park. The existing bridge was constructed in 1923/1924 as part of the TH 1 project, later designated US 61. Following realignment of US 61 in the late 1960s, the bridge was repurposed for pedestrian and snowmobile use, then transferred to the MNDNR in 1974. From 1979 to 1986, the bridge was incorporated into Tettegouche State Park and reconstructed to accommodate a realigned park entrance. Subsequent work in 2004 addressed structural deterioration and deck resurfacing. Given condition and design, annual inspection is required to comply with federal regulations and maintain safe operation. This Bridge has been prioritized by the MNDNR due to the structural concerns and the significant public impact given much of the State Park would be inaccessible were the bridge to fail or be closed. The new bridge will meet modern design standards.

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.

This proposal will provide for the completion of the required engineering, design, and construction of a new, multi-span steel bridge with a concrete deck over the Baptism River within Tettegouche State Park. As proposed, the new structure will carry both vehicle, pedestrian, and State Trail traffic over the Baptism River. This existing State Park bridge is a multi span steel bridge with a Baltimore Deck Truss main-span and steel girder approach spans. To advance the necessary replacement, the MNDNR completed preliminary engineering, design, and environmental analysis for the replacement structure in 2024. It is the intent of the MNDNR to complete the final engineering, including the development of the final plans and specifications, during 2025-2026. Historical architectural evaluation has previously determined the existing bridge to not be historically significant. The replacement of the existing bridge is critical to ensure safe, continued public access to those portions of Tettegouche State Park located inland of TH 61, including the Baptism River Campground and the Baptism High Falls Observation areas. The new bridge also represents a critical connection for the future Tettegouche State Park Segment of the Gitchi Gami State Trail, for which preliminary plans are anticipated to be complete in 2027.

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 proposal will result in the completion of the required engineering, design, and construction for the replacement of the existing Tettegouche State Park, Baptism River Bridge. The existing bridge, constructed in 1923. The demolition of the existing bridge and the installation of the replacement bridge will be conducted to ensure potential impacts to the State Park, the Baptism River and surrounding resources are limited to the extent possible. Should the existing bridge be closed due to further deterioration both public and Park staff access to those portions of Tettegouche State Park inland of TH 61 could be closed.

Activities and Milestones

Activity 1: Tettegouche State Park – Baptism River Bridge Replacement

Activity Budget: \$8,625,000

Activity Description:

This project proposes the replacement of Bridge 3459, a 5-span, 383-foot-long, steel truss bridge located within Tettegouche State Park. This bridge was originally developed by the Minnesota Department of Transportation (Minnesota Highway Department) in 1923 and subsequently transferred to the MNDNR in the 1980s for use as a State Park Bridge, following the upgrading of TH 61. The current bridge is considered “fracture critical” due to design and requires annual inspection given the nature of the deficiency and the potential for failure. Given the structural deficiencies, the MNDNR has completed preliminary engineering and design for a proposed replacement bridge. The replacement bridge is to be a 3-span, steel structure with a concrete deck containing two 13-foot traffic lanes and a 12-foot trail that is separated from the traffic lanes. Given the presence of TH 61 and the associated constraints, the replacement bridge includes a broad horizontal curve. It is the intent of the MNDNR to complete the final plans and specifications for the new bridge during 2025-2026, including extensive geotechnical analysis given the nature of the area’s bedrock. With the MNDNR commitment to complete all required engineering, the requested ENRTF funding will be used solely for the new bridge’s construction.

Activity Milestones:

Description	Approximate Completion Date
Completion Project Engineering - Tettegouche State Park / Baptism River Bridge Replacement	December 31, 2026
Project Permitting and SHPO Consult Complete – Tettegouche State Park / Baptism River Bridge Replacement	June 30, 2027
Construction Contract Awarded – Tettegouche State Park / Baptism River Bridge Replacement	June 30, 2027
Project Construction Complete – Tettegouche State Park / Baptism River Bridge	June 30, 2030
Project Closeout and Final Reporting – Tettegouche State Park / Baptism River Bridge	June 30, 2030

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 State Park is a component of Minnesota's Outdoor Recreation System and the proposed project will be implemented through the MnDNR Parks and Trails Division staff. All project engineering, design, contract administration, and construction inspection will be completed by or under the direct oversight of the MN DNR Operation Services Division. The MnDNR Parks and Trails Division will operate, maintain, and protect the new bridge when complete. The implementation of this project will immediately and significantly decrease the Parks and Trails Division's annual operational costs for several decades, given the required annual inspections will no longer be required.

Other ENRTF Appropriations Awarded in the Last Six Years

Name	Appropriation	Amount Awarded
Minnesota State Trails Development	M.L. 2021, First Special Session, Chp. 6, Art. 5, Sec. 2, Subd. 09i	\$994,000
Minnesota State Trails Development	M.L. 2021, First Special Session, Chp. 6, Art. 6, Sec. 2, Subd. 09s	\$4,266,000
Minnesota State Trails Development	M.L. 2022, , Chp. 94, Art. , Sec. 2, Subd. 09g	\$7,387,000
Minnesota State Trails Development	M.L. 2023, , Chp. 60, Art. 2, Sec. 2, Subd. 09e	\$4,952,000
Minnesota State Trails Development	M.L. 2024, , Chp. 83, Art. , Sec. 2, Subd. 09h	\$5,036,000

Project Manager and Organization Qualifications

Project Manager Name: Kent Skaar

Job Title: Parks and Trails Division - Senior Project Manager

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

Kent Skaar has been an employee of the State of Minnesota for more than 30 years. For the last 25 years, as an employee of the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources Parks and Trails Division, he has been principally responsible for the development of MNDNR-administered public water accesses, state trails, and motorized off-highway recreational facilities. His experience includes facility design, construction, and project management for projects of all sizes. Many of the projects include multiple disciplines and local partners. Mr. Skaar has extensive experience with grant management, procedures, and the requirements associated with a variety of federal and non-federal funding.

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 trails, 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](https://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								
		Tettegouche State Park – Baptism River Bridge Replacement	Development of a new. replacement vehicle and trail bridge over the Baptism River in Tettegouche State Park, Lake Co.	X				\$8,524,038
							Sub Total	\$8,524,038
Acquisitions and Stewardship								
							Sub Total	-
Travel In Minnesota								
							Sub Total	-
Travel Outside Minnesota								
							Sub Total	-
Printing and Publication								

							Sub Total	-
Other Expenses								
		MN DNR Direct and Necessary Costs	Pay for activities that are directly related to and necessary for accomplishing appropriated programs/projects. Direct and necessary costs cover HR Support (~\$0), Safety Support (~\$0), Financial Support (~\$97,689), Communication Support (~\$1,902), IT Support (~\$0), and Planning Support (~\$1,371) that are necessary to accomplishing funded programs/projects					\$100,962
							Sub Total	\$100,962
							Grand Total	\$8,625,000

Classified Staff or Generally Ineligible Expenses

Category/Name	Subcategory or Type	Description	Justification Ineligible Expense or Classified Staff Request
Capital Expenditures		Tettegouche State Park – Baptism River Bridge Replacement	<p>All anticipated costs are considered to be eligible.</p> <p>Additional Explanation: The proposed Bridge will be maintained by the MnDNR for the 50+ year useful life.</p> <p>Additional Explanation : The new, replacement will be operated and maintained by the MNDNR as a critical component of the Public's access to much of Tettegouche State Park over the structures 50 to 100 year useful life.</p>

Non ENRTF Funds

Category	Specific Source	Use	Status	Amount
State				
Cash	Capital Bond Appropriation - Minnesota Department of Natural Resources Asset Preservation (ML 2025 or 2026)	Representing one of the Departments priorities, this funding is intended to provide for the required engineering, construction administration and partial construction funding for the development of the replacement Tettegouche State Park Baptism River Bridge.	Potential	\$2,875,000
			State Sub Total	\$2,875,000
Non-State				
			Non State Sub Total	-
			Funds Total	\$2,875,000

Total Project Cost: \$11,500,000

This amount accurately reflects total project cost?

Yes

Attachments

Required Attachments

Visual Component

File: [dbf98867-dd3.pdf](#)

Alternate Text for Visual Component

2026 LCCMR MN State Parks Tettegouche Entrance Bridge Location Map...

Supplemental Attachments

Capital Project Questionnaire, Budget Supplements, Support Letter, Photos, Media, Other

Title	File
Engineers Rendering of Proposed Tettegouche SP Entrance Bridge	67e0a730-231.pdf
Preliminary Plan Exhibit - Tettegouche SP Bridge Replacement	21cf55c3-1d9.pdf
Photo of the Tettegouche SP Entrance Bridge under Inspection	ff1fec09-6be.jpe
Capital Projects Questionnaire - Tettegouche State Park Bridge Replacement	c194a21c-9d3.pdf

Administrative Use

Does your project include restoration or acquisition of land rights?

No

Do you understand that travel expenses are only approved if they follow the "Commissioner's Plan" promulgated by the Commissioner of Management of Budget or, for University of Minnesota projects, the University of Minnesota plan?

N/A

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

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 pre-design, design, construction, or renovation of a building, trail, campground, or other fixed capital asset costing \$10,000 or more or large-scale stream or wetland restoration?

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 as "the provision of care,

treatment, education, training, instruction, or recreation to children")?

No

Provide the name(s) and organization(s) of additional individuals assisting in the completion of this proposal:

MNDNR Parks and Trails Division and Operations Services Division staff

Do you understand that a named service contract does not constitute a funder-designated subrecipient or approval of a sole-source contract? In other words, a service contract entity is only approved if it has been selected according to the contracting rules identified in state law and policy for organizations that receive ENRTF funds through direct appropriations, or in the DNR's reimbursement manual for non-state organizations. These rules may include competitive bidding and prevailing wage requirements

N/A