



## Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund

### 2026 Request for Proposal

#### General Information

**Proposal ID:** 2026-445

**Proposal Title:** Keep it Clean Winterized Sani-Dump Stations

#### Project Manager Information

**Name:** Robyn Dwight

**Organization:** Upper Red Lake Area Association

**Office Telephone:** (218) 556-5844

**Email:** robyndwight1@gmail.com

#### Project Basic Information

**Project Summary:** Infrastructure for the safe collection and removal of raw sewage/waste from Ice Shelter holding tanks throughout the winter fishing season.

**ENRTF Funds Requested:** \$275,000

**Proposed Project Completion:** June 30, 2027

**LCCMR Funding Category:** Small Projects (G)

**Secondary Category:** Water (B)

#### Project Location

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

Region(s): NW

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

Region(s): NW

**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.**

Our project will provide on-shore, winterized Sani dump stations at five access points, significantly reducing the phosphates, nitrates, & other toxic sewage waste being deposited on the ice, under the ice & along the shorelines of Upper Red Lake. DNR Creel survey data shows more than a 300% increase in fishing pressure from 1976-2000 during the ice-angling season. This trend reflects similar trends on other Ice Belt Lakes & coincides with the introduction & increasing popularity of RV-styled wheelhouses. Upper Red Lake experienced 2.4 million angler hours & over 70,000 angler visits in 2021, of which, greater than 65% were overnight stays in wheelhouse shelters. RV-styled wheelhouses now have heated black & grey water holding tanks with a 30-gallon capacity on average. Northwestern Minnesota has no approved winterized dump stations to accommodate this phenomenon. We have testimony & evidence of multiple instances of sewage being released onto Upper Red Lake & along the roadways & shorelines every winter. Last winter, thanks to the new "Litter on Ice" law, multiple law enforcement officers, MNDNR Conservation Officers, businesses, & individuals have testified that there is virtually no garbage or waste on Upper Red Lake. Our biowaste bag collection program, education, & enforcement are working, but we must do more.

**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.**

Our research & observations show that winterized sani-dumps will be best utilized near the lake access points with the most wheelhouse traffic. The human bio-waste removal pilot program at Upper Red Lake provided dedicated dumpsters for twenty-three tons of human waste, ten tons of which were toilet bags in 2022. This program does not include the solid waste removed by resort owners at their own cost. Every winter, since then, we have maintained this public service. Our education & awareness campaign instructs visitors about the program. We also state that there are no approved, winterized RV dumps in the area or the northern half of Minnesota & that visitors must empty holding tanks elsewhere. In a recent survey, lake businesses, access owners, residents, & visitors agreed that we need winter resources to manage a winter waste problem. We propose to provide winterized sani-dump stations, with insulated holding tanks & washable concrete pads (following state regulations), educational signage, & sponsors' logos to promote partner participation. As the dump stations come into use, managers will gather data as part of a full report, understanding that this is a long-overdue and sustainable response to an environmental, recreational & human health problem.

**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?**

Our project has the potential to prevent several tons of untreated toilet waste from entering the waters of Upper Red Lake during the winter fishing season. Increases in phosphorus and nitrogen contribute to the problems of algae blooms and aquatic invasive species. Pharmaceuticals in human urine negatively impact aquatic life forms. Microplastics from shredded toilet bags also enter the water unnecessarily. Children playing on the ice are vulnerable to piles of discharge hidden under the snow. This is a human health, recreation, natural resources, and fisheries problem. Our project, combined with the measures now in place, will have an impact.

## Activities and Milestones

### Activity 1: Grant Administration

**Activity Budget:** \$50,000

**Activity Description:**

Provide grant administration, fiscal management, contract management, and reporting at required intervals

**Activity Milestones:**

Description	Approximate Completion Date
Signed Grant Agreements with Business Owners	September 30, 2025
Fiscal management and reporting completed at required intervals.	June 30, 2026
Project management/oversight for construction of each project site	June 30, 2026

### Activity 2: System Construction

**Activity Budget:** \$185,000

**Activity Description:**

Activity will include: preparing the site, materials, installation, water and electricity as needed, installing traffic pads, including necessary options for heated water and security lighting, environmental educational signage, and other details per design for an estimated five sites.

**Activity Milestones:**

Description	Approximate Completion Date
Site Preparation	November 30, 2025
Installation of System	November 30, 2025
Addition of Any Site-Specific Options	November 30, 2025
Final stabilization	June 30, 2026
Educational and instructional signage	June 30, 2026

### Activity 3: Technical Services

**Activity Budget:** \$40,000

**Activity Description:**

Provide soil testing, design assistance, site assessments, construction inspections, and other technical services as needed throughout the project

**Activity Milestones:**

Description	Approximate Completion Date
soil testing, site assessments, and design	September 30, 2025
construction inspections	November 30, 2025
technical services as necessary	June 30, 2026

## Project Partners and Collaborators

Name	Organization	Role	Receiving Funds
Tammy Audette: Administrator	Red Lake Watershed District Board	Fiscal Agent	Yes

## 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?**

After installation of winterized dump stations, business owners will assume the costs of operation and maintenance. Under our agreement, they will provide information as to usage, benefits, costs, and any problems they encounter in the first five years. Project administrator/coordinator will use this data in our reports. The dump stations will stay in place for the life of the infrastructure. If additional work is needed, funds will be collected through user fees by the business owners.

## Project Manager and Organization Qualifications

**Project Manager Name:** Robyn Dwight

**Job Title:** President/Keep it Clean Committee: Upper Red Lake Area Association

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

As president & Keep it Clean Committee member of the Upper Red Lake Area Association, a 501c.4 since 1977 with around 300 members, I am responsible for overseeing the gambling account & general funds of our organization while chairing regular monthly board meetings to support our volunteer work in the Upper Red Lake Area. I partnered with the Beltrami County Soil & Water Conservation District to successfully apply for grant funding from the Red Lake Watershed District Board, the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, the Board of Water & Soil Resources, & our association, to develop & maintain successful & ongoing bio-waste removal projects, & to initiate education & awareness about the problems associated with winter angling/camping on Minnesota's frozen lakes. As a volunteer with the Keep it Clean Initiative, I have established partnerships with stakeholders across Minnesota who share our concerns. I testified before the House Environment & Natural Resources Finance & Policy Committee for HF2745-SF2789, on March 22, 2023. That bill is now the "Litter on Ice" law. In February of 2025, I testified in the House Environment Committee with Rep. Andrew Myers, Bob Meier (MNDNR), & Tom Johnson (MPCA) in support of HF 1120, which would provide statewide, multi-agency administration of the Keep it Clean program with grant funding options for related projects at the local level. With Keep it Clean partners at Lake of the Woods & Mille Lacs Lake, I have designed & managed a Keep it Clean Facebook page & website to share our initiative, state-wide: [keepitcleanmn.org](http://keepitcleanmn.org). I encourage data collection, maintain records & regularly communicate with stakeholders & partners, including the Director of Water Services for the Red Lake Nation DNR, to ensure transparency & full participation in our work to protect public waters and shorelines in the Upper Red Lake Area.

**Organization:** Upper Red Lake Area Association

**Organization Description:**

The Upper Red Lake Area Association's mission is "to promote & enhance the Upper Red Lake Area, & the economic, commercial, & social interests of its inhabitants". We are a 501c.4 charitable organization, whose volunteer members strive to do good works such as being responsible land & water stewards in an area that relies on tourism, sport fishing & other recreation, logging, farming, & small business to protect and grow our community. We are invested in clean water. Our members joined in the fight to bring back the walleye fishery on Upper Red Lake in 2006, & by 2009, we built

& installed Crappie Cribs to assist that species thrive. We participate in DNR fisheries meetings, hold annual shoreline cleanups, & work with partners to manage billboards & signage promoting lake stewardship. Our association has been very active in the area since 1977.

## Budget Summary

Category / Name	Subcategory or Type	Description	Purpose	Gen. Ineligible	% Benefits	# FTE	Classified Staff?	\$ Amount
<b>Personnel</b>								
RLWD employee/legal/contractual		Fiscal Agent			10%	0.32		\$30,000
Project Coordinator		Oversee project activities and milestones and collaborate with fiscal agent/partner to manage the grant expenditures			5%	0.4		\$20,000
							<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>\$50,000</b>
<b>Contracts and Services</b>								
Certified Environmental Services and Design Contractor	Service Contract	Soil Testing and System Design				0		\$52,000
Certified Installer TBD	Service Contract	Site Preparation, installation of System, and final stabilization.				0		\$165,000
Beltrami SWCD	Service Contract	Provide environmental services to landowners and the association throughout the duration of the grant.				0.1		\$5,000
TBD	Service Contract	Design and building of informational signs for dump station.				0		\$3,000
							<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>\$225,000</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>								

							Sub Total	-
Printing and Publication								
							Sub Total	-
Other Expenses								
							Sub Total	-
							Grand Total	\$275,000

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	-

Total Project Cost: \$275,000

This amount accurately reflects total project cost?

Yes

## Attachments

### Required Attachments

#### *Visual Component*

File: [b3d53d51-8e4.pdf](#)

#### *Alternate Text for Visual Component*

Photographs of bio-waste dumpsters and signage at West Wind Resort, A Keep it Clean billboard in Waskish Township, & the Keep it Clean mobile display storage trailer and traveling billboard....

#### *Financial Capacity*

Title	File
Upper Red Lake Area Association Form 990	<a href="#">e5b365e8-682.pdf</a>

#### *Board Resolution or Letter*

Title	File
URLAA Letter of Support	<a href="#">996e8e3c-fbd.pdf</a>
MASWCD Resolution	<a href="#">92d82f59-2d0.pdf</a>
RLWD Resolution	<a href="#">a96e77e1-09e.pdf</a>

### Supplemental Attachments

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

Title	File
LOTW graph of fishing pressure	<a href="#">2862002e-4c4.pdf</a>

## 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?**

Yes

**Does the organization have a fiscal agent for this project?**

Yes, Red Lake Watershed District

**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:**

Tammy Audette: Administrator - Red Lake Watershed District Board, Upper Red Lake Area Association Board

**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**

Yes, I understand

