



Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund

2027 Request for Proposal

General Information

Proposal ID: 2027-285

Proposal Title: Casting Lines, Growing Habitat, Connecting Community

Project Manager Information

Name: Michael Stifter

Organization: City of Hutchinson

Office Telephone: (320) 234-4212

Email: mstifter@hutchinsonmn.gov

Project Basic Information

Project Summary: Hutchinson requests ENRTF funding to build two fishing piers, improve safety and shoreline habitat at Otter Lake, and expand equitable, accessible outdoor recreation for the community for residents to enjoy.

ENRTF Funds Requested: \$530,000

Proposed Project Completion: October 31, 2029

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): Central

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

Region(s): Central

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.

Otter and Campbell Lakes are a key natural resource within the City of Hutchinson, providing important recreational opportunities for residents and visitors. Its proximity to the Luce Line State Trail and the South Fork of the Crow River, a designated State Water Trail, underscores its regional significance for fishing, wildlife viewing, and lakeside recreation. However, both lakes currently lack safe, accessible shoreline-based fishing infrastructure and ADA-compliant parking, limiting its use for community members who rely on land-based access.

These limitations disproportionately affect residents living in MPCA-identified Environmental Justice Areas of Concern (EJAC), where at least 40 percent of the population lives 185 percent below the federal poverty level. Many households without boats or private shoreline access are unable to fully enjoy the lake's recreational benefits.

Improving shoreline access, restoring native vegetation, and enhancing habitat near the proposed pier and parking area will expand recreational equity, support ecological recovery, and benefit more than 15,000 local residents and countless other annual visitors from outside the City of Hutchinson.

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.

The City of Hutchinson is applying for ENRTF funding to improve equitable, safe access to Otter Lake while supporting habitat restoration. This project proposes constructing one ADA-compliant fishing pier and an ADA-accessible parking area on Otter Lake, creating barrier-free opportunities for residents/visitors to engage with one of Hutchinson's most valued natural resources. These improvements will allow people of all abilities—especially those without boats or private shoreline—to safely enjoy fishing, wildlife observation, and lakeside recreation.

The project also includes the installation of a fishing pier across the road from it on Otter Lake along with shoreline habitat restoration around the pier. Native vegetation will be re-established to stabilize soils, improve water quality, and expand near-shore habitat for fish/amphibians/birds. This combination of access enhancement and ecological restoration ensures that public use and natural resource protection advance together.

All work will occur on land owned by the City of Hutchinson. This project complements ongoing, separately funded work to address broader watershed challenges, including upstream streambank stabilization, sediment-reduction basin design, and future in-lake habitat improvements supported by 2021 Bonding Proceeds and city funding.

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 will protect and enhance Otter Lake by combining accessible public recreation with targeted ecological restoration. Native shoreline plantings and improved near-shore habitat will strengthen water quality, support fish and wildlife, and increase ecological resilience. By providing safe, ADA-compliant shoreline access, the project promotes low-impact outdoor recreation that builds community stewardship of natural resources. These improvements also complement ongoing watershed efforts to reduce sedimentation and restore ecological function. Collectively, the project conserves biodiversity, preserves the lake's long-term ecological health, and enhances a publicly owned natural resource for current users and future generations.

Activities and Milestones

Activity 1: Community Engagement, Pre-Design and Design of Fishing Piers and Parking Lot at Otter Lake and habitat restoration

Activity Budget: \$50,000

Activity Description:

Community Engagement and Pre-Design activities will be done to determine feasibility. Final design and engineering will include all necessary design work to develop construction plans for the fishing piers and parking lot installation. The accessible pier at Otter Lake and the proposed parking lot will be designed to be compliant with ADA standards. Permits that will be required for this project will include MNDNR public waters, MNWCA, US Army Corps of Engineers 404, and MPCA NPDES. The engineer will complete all bid specifications for the public RFP process.

Activity Milestones:

Description	Approximate Completion Date
Selection of Consultant	July 31, 2027
Community Engagement/Pre-Design	September 30, 2027
Natural Resources Delineation	September 30, 2027
Pre-Design Review	September 30, 2027
Consultation with SHPO	September 30, 2027
Permitting Review	November 30, 2027
Approval of Draft Plans	December 31, 2027
Approval of Final Plans and Specifications	February 28, 2028
Advertisement for Bid	February 28, 2028

Activity 2: Pre-Construction

Activity Budget: \$40,000

Activity Description:

This activity includes contractor selection, finalizing any required permits, conducting pre-construction meetings, project staking, contractor mobilization, and site preparation.

Activity Milestones:

Description	Approximate Completion Date
Select Contractor	March 31, 2028
Secure Permits	April 30, 2028
Pre-Construction Meeting	April 30, 2028
Staking	May 31, 2028
Mobilization	May 31, 2028
Site Preparation	May 31, 2028

Activity 3: Construction of Fishing Piers, Parking Lot, Shoreland and Habitat Restoration

Activity Budget: \$430,000

Activity Description:

This activity includes construction materials and services for the fishing piers installation and the parking lot adjacent to Otter Lake as well as shoreland and habitat restoration activities.

Activity Milestones:

Description	Approximate Completion Date
Construction, Oversight, and Administration	August 31, 2028
Change Orders	August 31, 2028
Final Grading	October 31, 2028
Substantial Completion	October 31, 2028
Contingency	October 31, 2028

Activity 4: Project Close-Out**Activity Budget:** \$10,000**Activity Description:**

This activity includes final stabilization, punch list items, as-built surveys, and required activities for the LCCMR grant process including notice of funding restriction, certificate of occupancy (or equivalent), ENRTF signage installed, and park re-opening.

Activity Milestones:

Description	Approximate Completion Date
Stabilization	October 31, 2028
Punch List	November 30, 2028
As-Builts	December 31, 2028
Notice of Funding Restriction Recorded	December 31, 2028
ENRTF Signage Installed	December 31, 2028
Site Re-Opening	December 31, 2028

Project Partners and Collaborators

Name	Organization	Role	Receiving Funds
Alan Gleisner	DNR-Hutchinson	Area Hydrologist	No
Scott Mackenthun	DNR-Hutchinson	Area Fisheries Supervisor	No
Ryan Freitag	McLeod SWCD	District Manager	No
Diane Sander	Crow River Organization of Water (CROW)	Watershed Coordinator	No
Gary Forcier	City of Hutchinson	Mayor	No
Chad Czmowski	City of Hutchinson	Council Member	No
Bill Arndt	Resident-City of Hutchinson	Citizen	No
Alex Mienke	US Army Corps of Engineers	Project Manager	No
Lynn Neuman	City of Hutchinson	Parks and Recreation Director	No
Dan Jochum	City of Hutchinson	Planning and Zoning Director	No
Brandon Braithwaite	City of Hutchinson	City Engineer	No
Matt Jaunich	City of Hutchinson	City Administrator	No
Brett Carlson	USDA NRCS	District Conservationist	No
Marco Graziani	MPCA	Pollution Control Specialist	No

Dissemination

Describe your plans for dissemination, presentation, documentation, or sharing of data, results, samples, physical collections, and other products and how they will follow ENRTF Acknowledgement Requirements and Guidelines.

This project will implement a dissemination strategy to ensure awareness, accessibility, and long-term value of all results. Key findings will be shared with state and local agencies, including watershed districts, municipalities, BWSR, MPCA, DNR, and other partners who may directly benefit from the outcomes, supporting improved natural resource management across Minnesota. Stakeholder engagement will include community presentations and targeted briefings. Public-facing communication will be prioritized through accessible materials such as fact sheets, infographics, project webpages, and social media updates, helping residents understand how Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund (ENRTF) support advances environmental stewardship. All outreach materials, signage, reports, and publications will follow ENRTF acknowledgment requirements using the trust fund logo or approved attribution language. If ENRTF funds are used for dissemination activities, these actions will also be included in the project’s Activities, Milestones, and Budget to ensure full compliance.

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?

Future phases of the project will include additional recreational improvements, the deepening of Campbell Lake and the northern portion of Otter Lake, and the installation of additional fish habitats in Otter and Campbell Lakes. Funding for the larger project will come from eligible grants received, State and Federal allocations, and from the City of Hutchinson. Once this project is completed, the City of Hutchinson will be responsible for maintaining the lakes’ fishing piers and public shorelines.

Project Manager and Organization Qualifications

Project Manager Name: Michael Stifter

Job Title: Director of Public Works

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

Mr. Stifter’s career in facilities management extends back three decades. In the 90s this experience began with management of various forms of student housing at 4 different universities. Over the course of 17 years at the University Wisconsin-River Falls he was promoted from housing management roles to Director, then Executive Director of Facilities Management. In this role Mr. Stifter was responsible for a comprehensive facilities management department consisting of grounds, maintenance, custodial, engineering, administrative, heating plant, postal, and central stores/storeroom services. He assisted the campus planner with capital budget development and was involved in Strategic Planning, Master Planning, and Integrated Planning activities on a regular basis.

In 2016 he took the position of Public Works Director at the City of River Falls. In 2023 he moved from River Falls to Hutchinson, retaining the role of Public Works Director. At Hutchinson, he plans, programs, directs and evaluates all public works operations related to engineering, streets/alleys, water/wastewater/stormwater systems, airports, cemeteries, urban forestry, and HATS facilities.

In addition to his extensive experience in facilities and public works management, Mr. Stifter does part-time work as a financial coach. He has a passion for helping clients to develop financial literacy and sustainable money habits. The fact that he spends his free time guiding clients towards financial responsibility, not to mention his decades of directly applicable experience, make Mr. Stifter an excellent candidate for management of an ENRTF-funded project.

Organization: City of Hutchinson

Organization Description:

The City of Hutchinson is situated about 50 miles west of the Twin Cities metro area. As of 2023, Hutchinson had a total population of 14,629 according to the US Census (ACS 5-year). Otter and Campbell Lakes, which are fed by the South Fork Crow River, are the most prominent geographical features of the city. The river and the long, skinny eastern segment of Otter Lake that it becomes, bisect the city along Highway 7. In Hutchinson, a home-rule charter city, the City Council is the governing authority. The mayor, Gary Forcier, serves as the chair of the council though he does not ultimately have greater authority than the other council members. Matt Jaunich is the city administrator whose primary function is to provide supervision over all municipal departments.

The proposed restoration project will be led by the Public Work and Engineering Department. The City of Hutchinson values its many natural resources and is committed to protecting, preserving, and restoring the environment for its citizens and future generations. The Public Works team oversees the city’s forestry program, advises on energy production, and oversees water quality at the lakes.

Budget Summary

Category / Name	Subcategory or Type	Description	Purpose	Gen. Ineligible	% Benefits	# FTE	Classified Staff?	\$ Amount
Personnel								
							Sub Total	-
Contracts and Services								
TBD	Service Contract	A Consultant will be hired through a competitive RFP process to assist the City in conducting Community Engagement, Pre-Design, Construction, and Close-Out activities.				0		\$530,000
							Sub Total	\$530,000
Equipment, Tools, and Supplies								
							Sub Total	-
Capital Equipment								
							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	\$530,000

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				
Cash	City Funds	Support of overall project costs	Secured	\$210,000
			Non State Sub Total	\$210,000
			Funds Total	\$210,000

Total Project Cost: \$740,000

This amount accurately reflects total project cost?

Yes

Attachments

Required Attachments

Visual Component

File: [20adfbba-dc3.pdf](#)

Alternate Text for Visual Component

The project includes two fishing piers on Otter Lake, including one accessible pier with an adjacent accessible parking lot. It also features shoreline and habitat improvements adjacent to both fishing piers to enhance public access, environmental health, and overall usability of the area....

Financial Capacity

Title	File
Audit Report - 2024	92f552ea-242.pdf

Board Resolution or Letter

Title	File
2027-285 Council Resolution for LCCMR - signed_received 03-30-26	a0a8f8c4-517.pdf
LCCMR Resolution of Support - placeholder	99bbb1a5-358.docx

Supplemental Attachments

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

Title	File
Project Exhibit	15868189-6ce.pdf
Capital Construction Project Questionnaire	e70f3784-631.pdf
Budget Addendum	6a5beffb-d47.pdf
City of Hutchinson - Walks and Trails Map	fb581a98-a60.pdf
Previous Grant Contract Agreement	a810e01a-2f3.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:

Todd Hubmer, Bolton & Menk, todd.hubmer@bolton-menk.com and Brady Nahkala, Bolton & Menk, brady.nahkala@bolton-menk.com

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