

*****LCCMR DRAFT*****

Six-Year Strategic Plan for Expenditures Recommended by the Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources from Minnesota's Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund

As Required by M.S. 116P.08, Subd. 3.

Adopted December XX, 2024

Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources
Centennial Office Building, 1st Floor
658 Cedar Street
St. Paul, MN 55155

E-mail: lccmr@lccmr.mn.gov
Phone: 651-296-2406



LCCMR DRAFT

Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources Members

Rep. Patty Acomb	Rep. Athena Hollins
Rita Albrecht	Shona Langseth
Rep. Jeff Backer (Co-Vice Chair)	Sen. Jennifer A. McEwen
William Faber (Co-Vice Chair)	Seth Moore
Nancy Gibson (Co-Chair)	Jeremy Peichel
Sen. Steve Green (Co-Vice Chair)	Sen. Aric Putnam
Rep. Rick Hansen (Co-Chair)	Michael Reese
Sen. Founj Hawj (Co-Chair)	Sen. Torrey Westrom
Rep. Josh Heintzeman	

Subcommittee on Strategic Planning Members

Rita Albrecht (Chair)	Alternate Members:
Sen. Steve Green	Sen. Jennifer A. McEwen
Rep. Rick Hansen	Jeremy Peichel
Sen. Founj Hawj	
Rep. Josh Heintzeman	
Shona Langseth	
Michael Reese (Vice Chair)	

Staff

Becca Nash, Director
Mike Campana, Senior Project Analyst
Michael Varien, Senior Project Analyst
Lisa Bigaouette, Project Analyst and Grant Monitoring Specialist
Tom Dietrich, Project Analyst and Grant Monitoring Specialist
Noah Fribley, Project Analyst and Communications Specialist
Tiffany Schaufler, Project Analyst and Grant Monitoring Specialist
Diana Griffith, Commission Assistant

Additional Thanks

Taylor Koehler
Evelyn Weiner

Availability of the Publication

- Information from this document may be copied and distributed to others.
- This publication can be made available in alternate formats, such as large print or audio formats, upon request. Contact (651) 296-2406 or lccmr@lccmr.mn.gov.

*****LCCMR DRAFT*****

Table of Contents

Introduction..... 1

Background..... 2

 About the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund..... 2

 About the Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources..... 2

 Standard LCCMR Proposal and Funding Process 3

Strategic Planning Process 4

Strategic Plan..... 5

 Vision..... 5

 Mission Statement 5

 Goals and Strategies for Expenditures from the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund 5

 Goal 1: Minnesota’s public and private lands – including forests, grasslands, wetlands, and agricultural lands – provide long-term benefits to fish, wildlife, and people. 5

 Goal 2: Minnesota’s water resources are better managed for both water quantity and quality to support aquatic life, drinking water, recreation, and other uses..... 6

 Goal 3: Minnesota has healthy and diverse aquatic and terrestrial wildlife and plant populations that sustain and enhance the state’s environment, economy, and quality of life..... 6

 Goal 4: Minnesota’s environment, natural resources, and communities are resilient in the face of climate change, land use changes, and extreme weather events..... 7

 Goal 5: All Minnesotans, especially young people, have access to and take advantage of opportunities to connect to the lands and waters of Minnesota, including through culturally relevant and innovative approaches. 7

 Goal 6: Minnesota achieves reliance on renewable energy in all sectors, including transportation, building, industry, agriculture, and others. 8

 Goal 7: Minnesota responds quickly and proactively to emerging environmental and natural resources issues. 9

 Goals and Strategies for the Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources 9

 Goal 1: The LCCMR recommends projects that will provide the most benefit to the environment and natural resources. 10

 Goal 2: The public is aware of and understands the purpose of the LCCMR and the ENRTF and their shared mission. 10

 Goal 3: The public is aware of ENRTF funding opportunities and understands the funding application and recommendation process. 10

 Goal 4: The LCCMR process for selecting and recommending proposals is transparent, understandable, fair, and accessible for all Minnesotans. 11

*****LCCMR DRAFT*****

Goal 5: LCCMR staff are timely and effective in responding and communicating to applicants, project managers, and LCCMR members. 11

Goal 6: Groups and organizations that have not traditionally participated in the LCCMR process understand the purpose of the ENRTF and LCCMR and how to apply for funding. 12

Goal 7: The public knows how ENRTF money is being spent and what benefits the public is gaining from those expenditures. 12

Evaluation and Selection Criteria 13

Outcomes 13

Appendices

- Appendix A. Minnesota Constitution, Article XI, Section 14
- Appendix B. LCCMR Governing Law
- Appendix C. Public Survey Summary
- Appendix D. Subject Matter Expert Survey Summary
- Appendix E. Public Listening Session Summary

LCCMR DRAFT

Introduction

The Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources (LCCMR) is required by law to adopt a strategic plan for making expenditures from the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund (ENRTF) every 6 years and review the plan every 2 years (M.S. 116P.08, subd. 3). The strategic plan identifies priority areas for funding and is used by the LCCMR as the basis for soliciting proposals through its annual request for proposals (RFP) and its rolling opportunity to fund emerging issues projects with unexpected and urgent needs. The plan only applies to expenditures from the ENRTF overseen by the LCCMR.

This plan builds from efforts started in 2019. At that time, using outside consultants, the LCCMR compiled and reviewed strategic plans from environmental and natural resources agencies and organization across the state and engaged past and current project managers, stakeholders, and members of the public using surveys, listening sessions, and panel discussions. The result of the 2019 efforts was draft strategic goals and strategies for making expenditures from the ENRTF. These draft strategic goals and strategies were the starting point for strategic planning discussions in late 2023 and 2024.

The LCCMR appointed a subcommittee in November 2023 to develop the strategic plan. The subcommittee met over ten times in the next year to discuss and develop recommendations for the full commission. As part of that process, the subcommittee conducted surveys of the public and subject matter experts and held four in-person listening session in different areas of the state and one virtual listening session. Based on recommendations from the subcommittee, the strategic plan and an updated RFP was drafted for consideration by the full commission.

The strategic plan establishes a new vision and mission statement for the ENRTF overseen by the LCCMR. To help achieve this vision and meet the mission, it contains goals and strategies for funding from the ENRTF and for LCCMR funding processes and communications. Evaluation and selection criteria for proposed projects have been revised to better articulate the commission's priorities. Finally, initial metrics have been developed to assess overall progress towards meeting goals and strategies and to provide measurable outcomes for expenditures.

The strategic plan guides future proposal solicitation, funding recommendations, and outreach from the LCCMR. The goals and strategies for funding from the ENRTF are the starting point for funding priorities and areas of emphasis contained in the commission's annual RFP. The goals and strategies for LCCMR processes and communications identify and prioritize internal initiatives to improve communication and outreach efforts and the process for recommending proposals. This plan serves as the foundation for the LCCMR's efforts to solicit and recommend environmental and natural resource projects that best protect, conserve, preserve, and enhance Minnesota's air, water, land, fish, wildlife, and other natural resources.

LCCMR DRAFT

Background

The Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources is the government entity that has traditionally overseen all funding from the Environmental and Natural Resources Trust Fund, a permanent, constitutionally established fund.

About the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund

The Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund (ENRTF) is a permanent fund in the Minnesota state treasury dedicated to funding activities that protect, conserve, preserve, and enhance the state's air, water, land, fish, wildlife, and other natural resources. The ENRTF was created in 1988 when 77% of Minnesota voters approved an amendment to the Minnesota Constitution (Art. XI, Sec. 14). The ENRTF provides a long-term, consistent, and stable source of funding for Minnesota's environment and natural resources for the benefit of current and future generations.

Money in the ENRTF originates from a combination of contributions and investment income. Forty percent of the net proceeds from the Minnesota State Lottery, or approximately seven cents of every dollar spent on playing the lottery, goes into the ENRTF, which is then managed and invested for continued growth by the State Board of Investment. Traditionally, up to 5.5% of the market value of the ENRTF was available for appropriation each year. Beginning in 2025, up to 7% of the market value of the ENRTF will be available for appropriation. As of June 30, 2024, the market value of the ENRTF was \$1,878,656,316.55, generating more than \$130 million a year for projects.

The Minnesota Legislature appropriates money from the ENRTF to fund efforts that protect, conserve, preserve, and enhance Minnesota's environment and natural resources and users' experience with those resources. Up to 5.5% of the market value, or approximately 80% of the available funds each year, may be appropriated by the legislature for specific projects based on recommendations from the Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources. Beginning in 2025, up to 1.5%, or approximately 20% of the available funds each year, may be appropriated to the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) for a community grant program.

Over the past 36 years, the ENRTF has funded key efforts across the state of Minnesota. Since 1991, the ENRTF has provided approximately \$1.1 billion to over 1,700 projects. Every county of the state has been impacted by funding from the ENRTF.

About the Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources

The Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources (LCCMR) is a commission of legislators and citizens whose primary function is to make funding recommendations to the Minnesota Legislature for special environmental and natural resources protection and enhancement projects, primarily from the ENRTF. Additionally, the LCCMR oversees funded projects to ensure funds are spent as approved and outcomes met. Since 1963, approximately \$1.5 billion from multiple funding sources has been awarded to more than 2,600 projects recommended to the legislature by the commission. More than 70% of this funding has come from the ENRTF and nearly 100% for projects funded over the last 20 years.

The LCCMR is composed of 17 members: five senators, five representatives, five citizens appointed by the governor, one citizen appointed by the Senate, and one citizen appointed by the House. Legislative members are appointed by legislative leadership and must include representation from both majority and minority parties. The citizen members appointed to the LCCMR must have experience or expertise in the

*****LCCMR DRAFT*****

science, policy, or practice of the protection, conservation, preservation, and enhancement of the state's environment and natural resources. At least one of the citizen members appointed by the governor must be a member recommended by the Tribal government representatives of the Minnesota Indian Affairs Council.

The LCCMR developed from a program initiated in 1963 to preserve, develop, and maintain the natural resources of Minnesota. The name and funding sources have changed over the years, with the most recent change in 2006, when the commission was restructured into its current form, with the addition of non-legislative citizen members in order to include citizen input more directly in the decision-making process.

Standard LCCMR Proposal and Funding Process

The LCCMR makes annual project funding recommendations to the Minnesota Legislature based on a competitive, multi-step proposal and selection process. Each year, a request for proposals (RFP) is issued to address LCCMR funding priorities. All proposals received in response to the RFP are reviewed and evaluated by LCCMR members. The commission selects a subset of proposals for further consideration and invites the applicants to present before the commission. After presentations, the commission selects which proposals to recommend to the legislature for funding and a recommended funding amount. Funding recommendations go before the legislature for consideration in the form of an appropriations bill and upon passage must be signed into law by the governor.

Funded projects are required to submit a work plan that must be approved by the LCCMR before a project can begin. Work plans provide a detailed description and budget for work that will be completed and outcomes that will be achieved with the funding. Once the project begins, project managers are required to provide two status update reports per year to the LCCMR until the project is completed.

Anyone may respond to the RFP and apply for funds from the ENRTF providing the proposal is consistent with the constitutional purpose of the fund. Funding recipients have included state agencies, local governments, universities and colleges, non-profit organizations, and private corporations. The LCCMR's process is a competitive one, and more proposals are generally received than can be funded based on the dollars available.

LCCMR DRAFT

Strategic Planning Process

The Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources (LCCMR) developed the strategic plan over the course of one year from December 2023 to December 2024. The commission decided to start with draft goals and strategies for expenditures from the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund (ENRTF) developed during 2019 strategic planning efforts and collect additional public and expert input in 2024. In addition, the commission decided to develop goals and strategies related to LCCMR communications and outreach and the proposal solicitation, review, and recommendation process. The LCCMR appointed a subcommittee to conduct these efforts and develop a recommended strategic plan for presentation to the full commission.

The 2024 process built on efforts started in 2019. At that time, the LCCMR contracted with Minnesota Management and Budget (MMB) Management Analysis and Development (MAD) to support strategic planning efforts. Over six months, MAD:

- Conducted a document scan of strategic plans from environmental and natural resources agencies and organization across the state.
- Gathered input from LCCMR members.
- Engaged past and current project managers, stakeholders, and members of the public using surveys, listening sessions, and panel discussions.

From this input, MAD developed goals and strategies for making expenditures from the ENRTF. These draft strategic goals and strategies were written into a strategic planning process report and served as the starting point for strategic planning discussions in late 2023 and 2024. The [2019 strategic planning process report](#) may be accessed from the following link: .

https://www.lccmr.mn.gov/documents/strategic_plan/enrtf_strategic_planning_process_report.pdf

The subcommittee met over ten times from December 2023 to November 2024 to discuss and develop recommendations for the full commission. Initial meetings focused on the vision and mission statement and plans for public engagement. From February to May 2024, the subcommittee gathered input through a public survey, a subject matter expert survey, and five listening sessions (See Appendix C, D, and E).

From June to November 2024, the subcommittee reviewed input from the surveys and listening sessions, revised the 2019 draft goals and strategies, and developed new goals and strategies for expenditures from the ENRTF as well as for LCCMR communications and outreach and the proposal solicitation, review, and recommendation process. The subcommittee reviewed and recommended new language for future requests for proposals (RFP) based on their recommended goals and strategies and developed new evaluation and selection criteria for proposal review. Finally, the subcommittee discussed and made recommendations on measurable outcomes. All recommendations required the support of at least four subcommittee members to be moved forward to the full commission. LCCMR staff drafted a strategic plan based on the subcommittee recommendations.

The full commission reviewed and discussed the draft strategic plan on November 13, 2024. Between meetings in November and December, the commission provided an opportunity for the public to review and comment on the draft plan. The comments were reviewed, and the strategic plan was approved by a supermajority (11) of members and adopted by the commission on December XX, 2024.

Subcommittee and commission meeting agendas, materials, audio and video, and minutes can be found on the [LCCMR Meetings](#) page: <https://www.lccmr.mn.gov/calendar/calendar-index.html>.

LCCMR DRAFT

Strategic Plan

The following vision, mission statement, goals and strategies, evaluation and selection criteria, and measurable outcomes constitute the Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources' (LCCMR) strategic plan for its role in recommending and overseeing expenditures from the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund (ENRTF). The strategic plan does not apply to expenditures from the ENRTF not under the purview of the LCCMR.

Vision

Minnesota's lands, waters, fish, and wildlife are plentiful, healthy, resilient, and appreciated for their intrinsic value as well as the benefits they provide us all.

Mission Statement

The mission of the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund is to fund environmental and natural resource projects that best protect, conserve, preserve, and enhance Minnesota's air, water, land, fish, wildlife, and other natural resources.

Goals and Strategies for Expenditures from the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund

The following goals and strategies represent priorities for funding from the ENRTF, as overseen by the LCCMR, over the next six years. The seven goals – related to land, water, fish and wildlife, education and outdoor recreation, resiliency, energy, and emerging issues – cover a broad range of natural resources, how Minnesotans interact with those resources, and environmental issues related to them. The strategies prioritize the use of the ENRTF for a wide-range of activities to meet the goals, including research, demonstration, monitoring, environmental education, planning, restoration, land acquisition, evaluation, on-the-ground implementation of management practices, and development of outdoor recreational opportunities. The goals and strategies are not presented in any order of priority.

LAND

Goal 1: Minnesota's public and private lands – including forests, grasslands, wetlands, and agricultural lands – provide long-term benefits to fish, wildlife, and people.

This goal will be achieved by focusing expenditures on projects that:

- 1.1 Develop, demonstrate, and/or evaluate new and innovative practices and processes on public and private lands, including agricultural and forest land, that provide multiple, long-term environmental benefits and economic considerations, including benefits related to habitat, water quality and quantity, soil health, and carbon sequestration.
- 1.2 Enhance education, technical assistance, or public outreach to promote the application of practices beneficial to the environment, natural resources, and all Minnesotans.

*****LCCMR DRAFT*****

- 1.3 Acquire and conserve minimally disturbed lands that provide the greatest capacity for multiple conservation benefits to humans, fish, wildlife, and water resources.
- 1.4 Restore and enhance lands to provide high-quality natural resource, ecological, or recreational value.
- 1.5 Foster collaboration among diverse groups, demonstrate the support of multiple stakeholders, and/or incorporate outreach to local and tribal communities to better protect lands.

WATER

Goal 2: Minnesota's water resources are better managed for both water quantity and quality to support aquatic life, drinking water, recreation, and other uses.

This goal will be achieved by focusing expenditures on projects that:

- 2.1 Research impacts of runoff, stormwater, or contaminants on surface water or groundwater quality and develop practical solutions to prevent or address these impacts.
- 2.2 Research current and future water supply and use to support planning efforts and implementation of best management practices and ensure the state's water resiliency and sustainability.
- 2.3 Increase understanding and awareness of weather and climate patterns and their potential impact on water resources.
- 2.4 Demonstrate innovative practices, strategies, and/or partnerships that prevent or reduce water issues in urban, suburban, or rural regions.
- 2.5 Implement measures to improve water quality and/or restore or enhance habitats, shoreline, or natural hydrology in lakes, rivers, wetlands, and other surface waters, with an emphasis on efforts that incorporate coordination and collaboration among tribal, state, and local agencies and community partners.
- 2.6 Provide educational opportunities or technical assistance programs for teachers, students, state and local decision-makers, landowners, or the public on how to improve and protect water resources, including groundwater, surface water, and stormwater systems.
- 2.7 Monitor and assess the condition of groundwater or surface water, including lakes, rivers, and wetlands, on a regular cycle and provide a long-term data set to support decision-making and evaluate efforts.

FISH AND WILDLIFE

Goal 3: Minnesota has healthy and diverse aquatic and terrestrial wildlife and plant populations that sustain and enhance the state's environment, economy, and quality of life.

This goal will be achieved by focusing expenditures on projects that:

- 3.1 Research species or ecosystems and develop strategies to effectively manage, maintain, protect, and restore healthy habitats and populations.
- 3.2 Monitor the health of natural systems to support and improve species management and conservation strategies.

*****LCCMR DRAFT*****

- 3.3 Support and provide technical assistance and/or planning support to private landowners on cost-effective, proven strategies and technologies to develop and restore diverse, native habitat.
- 3.4 Promote public awareness on the importance of diverse wildlife and plant populations through comprehensive education programs.
- 3.5 Prevent the introduction, reduce the spread, or develop and demonstrate alternative control techniques for invasive species.
- 3.6 Develop plans and/or implement conservation actions to protect, conserve, or restore species, with a priority on efforts that maintain or create connected, continuous habitat or address the needs of vulnerable, declining, poorly understood, or sensitive species.
- 3.7 Evaluate the effectiveness of current management practices and past investments to sustain and enhance wildlife and native plant populations.

RESILIENCY

Goal 4: Minnesota's environment, natural resources, and communities are resilient in the face of climate change, land use changes, and extreme weather events.

This goal will be achieved by focusing expenditures on projects that:

- 4.1 Research, demonstrate, and/or promote comprehensive and viable solutions for reducing the impacts of climate change, land use changes, or extreme weather events on the environment and natural resources, through both engineered and natural solutions targeted at critical areas.
- 4.2 Broaden understanding and implementation of effective climate adaptation management practices for natural resources among landowners through education, outreach, technical assistance, and/or the development of collaborations and networks to share and learn about new and innovative practices.
- 4.3 Support the development of local climate resiliency and adaptation plans for natural resources.
- 4.4 Implement land and water management practices and/or protect and restore wetlands, forests, prairies, and other critical systems to enhance biodiversity and provide multiple community resilience benefits.

EDUCATION AND OUTDOOR RECREATION

Goal 5: All Minnesotans, especially young people, have access to and take advantage of opportunities to connect to the lands and waters of Minnesota, including through culturally relevant and innovative approaches.

This goal will be achieved by focusing expenditures on projects that:

- 5.1 Address social, economic, or physical barriers to natural resource-based outdoor recreation through programs that encourage inclusivity and address inequities so that public lands and waters are accessible to all.

*****LCCMR DRAFT*****

- 5.2 Assess programs, activities, or physical spaces for their accessibility and effectiveness and/or implement changes to adapt and retrofit them to welcome more people.
- 5.3 Provide evidence-based, hands-on, and engaging curriculum, programs, or natural resource-based outdoor events to bring a diversity of students and/or adults to outdoor experiences.
- 5.4 Create mentorship programs, leadership opportunities, and/or learning experiences for a diversity of young people to explore and pursue careers in the environment and natural resources.
- 5.5 Enhance environmental education initiatives by integrating diverse cultural perspectives, experiences, and partnerships that foster environmental stewardship in all communities.
- 5.6 Develop local or regional plans to enhance natural resources-based outdoor recreational opportunities in communities across the state.
- 5.7 Collaborate or partner with indigenous, local, BIPOC, or underserved communities to develop culturally relevant, inclusive, and accessible environmental, natural resource, or natural resource-based outdoor recreation programs, practices, curriculum, or facilities.
- 5.8 Design and/or develop culturally relevant, accessible, resilient, and environmentally friendly outdoor recreation facilities and infrastructure – including recreation areas, parks, trails, fishing piers, or shelters – that create new natural resources-based experiences.
- 5.9 Expand networks of trails, parks, or natural areas to protect and connect green spaces seamlessly, improve accessibility and safety, and/or encourage all Minnesotans to recreate in and engage with nature.

ENERGY

Goal 6: Minnesota achieves reliance on renewable energy in all sectors, including transportation, building, industry, agriculture, and others.

This goal will be achieved by focusing expenditures on projects that:

- 6.1 Research and develop new and innovative renewable energy or fuel technologies with environmental considerations, including biofuels, e-fuels, sustainable aviation fuels, and energy storage.
- 6.2 Evaluate, demonstrate, and/or assess renewable energy systems or fuels for economic viability, compatibility with other land uses, and environmental and natural resource impacts over the full lifecycle of the technology.
- 6.3 Develop and/or implement plans that identify, prioritize, and coordinate efforts to reduce energy consumption and to transition to renewable energy through land use planning, infrastructure, education and awareness, and other methods.
- 6.4 Encourage and support the use of renewable energy and energy efficiency in agriculture, mining, industry, utilities, transportation, homes, or businesses.
- 6.5 Ensure equitable access to renewable energy and/or energy efficiency programs in all communities.

*****LCCMR DRAFT*****

- 6.6 Provide inclusive education and experiential learning programs to build a skilled and diverse workforce for the renewable energy sector.

EMERGING ISSUES

Goal 7: Minnesota responds quickly and proactively to emerging environmental and natural resources issues.

This goal will be achieved by focusing expenditures on projects that:

- 7.1 Identify, assess, and/or prioritize potential threats to the environment and natural resources.
- 7.2 Research and/or develop technologies and measures to detect or address emerging or emergency threats to the environment and natural resources.
- 7.3 Create collaborations and build partnerships among all parties – including academic institutions, government agencies, non-government organizations, communities, and the private sector – to foster innovation and leverage resources and expertise to better address emerging threats to the environment and natural resources.
- 7.4 Enhance coordination and interagency collaboration among federal, state, tribal, and local governments to ensure a unified response.
- 7.5 Implement proactive measures to prevent or minimize the impacts from emerging environmental or natural resource issues.
- 7.6 Implement natural resource corrective actions where delay will be detrimental to the environment and natural resources.
- 7.7 Restore impacted ecosystems to minimize the loss of benefits provided by these systems to people, fish, plants, and wildlife.

In addition, the LCCMR will work to:

- 7.8 Explore revised processes for requesting, evaluating, and awarding funds for emerging issues to ensure funds are available on a timely basis throughout the year.

Goals and Strategies for the Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources

The following goals and strategies represent priorities for LCCMR communications and outreach and the proposal solicitation, review, and recommendation process over the next six years. The commission chose these two priority areas of LCCMR's operations on which to focus during this period. The goals and strategies represent the LCCMR's commitment to public awareness and a fair and open process that leads to benefits across Minnesota.

It is not known at this time how much time and effort will be required to implement all strategies, but the goals and strategies are presented in order of priority to help focus efforts on the most important goals and strategies for the commission. The ability to implement all strategies over the next six years may be limited by commission and staff capacity.

*****LCCMR DRAFT*****

Goal 1: The LCCMR recommends projects that will provide the most benefit to the environment and natural resources.

The LCCMR will work to:

- 1.1 Develop a process for project managers to provide clear and measurable outputs and outcomes to assess project success.
- 1.2 Apply evaluation criteria consistently and review which priorities from the strategic plan are contained in the request for proposals (RFP) every funding cycle.
- 1.3 Require applicants provide data, citations, and/or letters of recommendation to support problem statements and proposed solutions in their proposal.
- 1.4 Explore options for periodic, rigorous, independent evaluation of the effectiveness and impact of past ENRTF investments.

Goal 2: The public is aware of and understands the purpose of the LCCMR and the ENRTF and their shared mission.

The LCCMR will work to:

- 2.1 Explore ways to maximize and expand the impact of social media and other online content, such as:
 - a) Assessing website and social media analytics and using other appropriate methods to determine what forms of communication are the most effective and reach the most people.
 - b) Ensuring a regular flow of engaging written, audio, video, or other content is produced and communicated throughout the year on a variety of social media and other online platforms.
- 2.2 Engage with the Community Grant Program and other ENRTF-funded grant programs to explore opportunities to collaborate, coordinate, and, if needed, differentiate among programs.
- 2.3 Cultivate and amplify traditional media opportunities.
- 2.4 Establish a presence at events, including:
 - a) Events hosted by ENRTF-funding recipients to highlight and amplify others' communications about the ENRTF and LCCMR.
 - b) Public events like the ag expo or the state fair to directly communicate with the public who may not regularly follow the LCCMR and the ENRTF.

Goal 3: The public is aware of ENRTF funding opportunities and understands the funding application and recommendation process.

The LCCMR will work to:

- 3.1 Provide direct and regular communication on multiple platforms to the public about the LCCMR process, meetings, and decisions.

*****LCCMR DRAFT*****

- 3.2 Provide direct and regular communication to applicants that keeps them informed about every step of the RFP and recommendation process and the status of their proposal.
- 3.3 Explore ways to maximize and expand the impact of social media and other online content, such as assessing website and social media analytics and using other appropriate methods to determine what forms of communication are the most effective and reach the most people.
- 3.4 Bolster RFP outreach to reach more potential applicants, such as:
 - a) Hosting and attending meetings and events – regional, topical, organizational – to directly communicate funding opportunities and answer questions about priorities and how to apply.
 - b) Cultivating and amplifying traditional media opportunities, including paid advertising.
- 3.5 Create new materials and opportunities to clearly and simply explain current LCCMR priorities and processes to the public and assist applicants.

Goal 4: The LCCMR process for selecting and recommending proposals is transparent, understandable, fair, and accessible for all Minnesotans.

The LCCMR will work to:

- 4.1 Continue to provide special consideration for small projects or organizations.
- 4.2 Review and update guidance on allowable expenses to make sure they are clear and align with commission expectations.
- 4.3 Evaluate on a regular basis the proposal application process and the LCCMR Proposal and Grants Management System to make it as accessible and simple as possible for users to submit proposals.
- 4.4 Explore alternative processes for selecting and recommending proposals to handle the increasing number of applications and to ensure the process is easy to communicate and for the public and applicants to understand.
- 4.5 Explore options to reduce the amount of time between proposal submittal and the availability of funding.
- 4.6 Develop a process for providing constructive feedback to applicants not recommended for funding.
- 4.7 Develop a process to receive regular feedback from applicants on the application, selection, and recommendation process.

Goal 5: LCCMR staff are timely and effective in responding and communicating to applicants, project managers, and LCCMR members.

The LCCMR will work to:

- 5.1 Ensure appropriate staffing levels to manage the LCCMR proposal request, evaluation, and recommendation process and oversight of approved projects as funding levels and number of projects increase.

*****LCCMR DRAFT*****

- 5.2 Hire nonpartisan staff dedicated solely to outreach, engagement, and communications efforts.
- 5.3 Implement standardized protocols for staff communication and coordination with LCCMR members and applicants on processes, meetings, and expectations.

Goal 6: Groups and organizations that have not traditionally participated in the LCCMR process understand the purpose of the ENRTF and LCCMR and how to apply for funding.

The LCCMR will work to:

- 6.1 Contact leaders, leverage existing connections and networks, and build relationships with communities and organizations that have not traditionally participated in the LCCMR process – including communities of color, tribal communities, and small nonprofits – to determine the best ways to communicate and conduct outreach with them.
- 6.2 Carry out targeted outreach to groups and organizations that have not traditionally been aware of the ENRTF and LCCMR to help them understand the purpose of the ENRTF and LCCMR and how to apply for funding.
- 6.3 Produce ENRTF and LCCMR-related outreach materials, including written, audio, and video content, that may be more accessible to groups and organizations that have not traditionally participated in the LCCMR process.

Goal 7: The public knows how ENRTF money is being spent and what benefits the public is gaining from those expenditures.

The LCCMR will work to:

- 7.1 Generate new, creative, varied, accessible, interesting, and comprehensive content that communicates the accomplishments of the ENRTF and the LCCMR, such as:
 - a) Focusing on technical information and storytelling.
 - b) Gathering content, including photos and videos, related to active and completed projects for use in regular communications.
- 7.2 Ensure full participation by all project managers in acknowledging the source of funding for their work in their communication efforts and signage.
- 7.3 Create clear and consistent brand for the LCCMR and ENRTF that connects all communications and outreach materials.
- 7.4 Explore new opportunities and assess existing communications channels to identify the most effective platforms to communicate the accomplishments and benefits of ENRTF-funded projects to our varied audiences, such as:
 - a) Assessing website and social media analytics and using other appropriate methods to determine what forms of communication are the most effective and reach the most people.
 - b) Hosting and attending events that communicate ENRTF accomplishments, such as lunchtime lectures, events hosted by ENRTF-funding recipients, or public events like the state fair or ag expo.

LCCMR DRAFT

- 7.5 Cultivate and amplify traditional media opportunities.
- 7.6 Communicate accomplishments and benefits of ENRTF-funded projects through existing LCCMR communications channels.

Evaluation and Selection Criteria

All proposals must be eligible for funding, as defined by law and as indicated in the request for proposals (RFP), and clearly articulate how the project will meet the constitutional purpose of protecting, conserving, preserving, or enhancing the state's air, water, land, fish, wildlife, or other natural resources. The following criteria will be considered in evaluating and selecting individual proposals to recommend for funding:

Funding Priorities: The proposal responds to RFP funding priorities.

Environmental or Natural Resource Benefits: The extent to which the project will benefit Minnesota's environment, natural resources, or how Minnesotans experience them relative to the amount requested.

Outcomes/Results: The proposal clearly identifies the work that will be done, and the specific outputs, results, and likely outcomes that will benefit the environment and natural resources, or how Minnesotans experience them.

Capacity: The proposal and past performance demonstrate the applicant's administrative, financial, professional, scientific, and/or technical capacity to manage the project and deliver on proposed outputs and results in a timely, accountable, and effective manner.

Completeness and Clarity: The proposal is clear, sufficiently detailed, and includes all required information and attachments needed to fully evaluate the proposal.

Additional factors may also be considered, as applicable, in evaluating and selecting proposals, including but not limited to:

Information and Dissemination: The project will contribute to the knowledge base *and* disseminate that information so that it can be used to benefit efforts to protect, conserve, restore, enhance, or manage the environment and natural resources.

Innovation: The project will employ or demonstrate innovative approaches to more effectively and efficiently solve specific environmental and natural resource issues.

Timeliness and Readiness: The proposal includes work that is urgent or would significantly benefit from funding in the current cycle *and* demonstrates readiness for that work to begin as soon as funds are available.

Leverage: The project will leverage additional efforts, resources, or non-state funds.

Collaboration/Coordination: The project will use a collaborative, multi-disciplinary approach with project partners from a diversity of agencies, organizations, or communities *and/or* will include meaningful engagement with those entities in completing the proposed work.

*****LCCMR DRAFT*****

Finally, the commission may consider how the selected proposals as a whole provide benefits to and address needs in all areas and communities of the state.

Outcomes

[Pending final recommendation from the LCCMR Subcommittee on Strategic Planning.]

*****LCCMR DRAFT*****

Appendix A. Minnesota Constitution, Article XI, Section 14

A permanent environment and natural resources trust fund is established in the state treasury. The assets of the fund shall be appropriated by law for the public purpose of protection, conservation, preservation, and enhancement of the state's air, water, land, fish, wildlife, and other natural resources. The assets of the fund shall not be used to pay the principal or interest of any bonds. The assets of the fund shall not be used to pay for any costs related to the construction, repair, improvement, or operation of any facility or system that processes wastewater, but may be used to pay for research related to wastewater. The amount appropriated each year of a biennium, commencing on July 1 in each odd-numbered year and ending on and including June 30 in the next odd-numbered year, may be up to seven percent of the market value of the fund on June 30 one year before the start of the biennium. Not less than 40 percent of the net proceeds from any state-operated lottery must be credited to the fund through December 31, 2050. [Adopted, November 8, 1988; Amended, November 6, 1990; November 3, 1998; November 5, 2024]

Appendix B. LCCMR Governing Law

[Insert 116P]

LCCMR DRAFT

Appendix C. Public Survey Summary

The LCCMR Subcommittee on Strategic Planning conducted an online public survey to gather broad input on priorities for environmental and natural resources funding and preferred methods to address those priorities. In addition, the survey asked basic demographic questions. The survey was open from March 13, 2024, to May 6, 2024, and available in English and four other languages: Spanish, Somali, Hmong, and Karen. Links to the survey were:

- Emailed directly to nearly 400 organizations across Minnesota, including environmental, natural resource, recreation, agriculture, energy, economic development, government, university and colleges, non-profits, for-profits, community, and tribal groups.
- Emailed to all state legislators and their staff.
- Posted to the LCCMR webpage and social media accounts.
- Sent to everyone on the LCCMR GovDelivery list.
- Announced through a press release.
- Made available through a QR code at concurrently held public listening sessions.

All recipients were encouraged to share the survey with their networks.

The subcommittee received 1,641 responses to the survey. Survey results were compiled and presented to the full commission. Highlights are presented below. Additional tables and details can be found in the [public survey results presentation](#):

https://www.lccmr.mn.gov/calendar/2024/2024-06-10-mtg/attachments/item09-2024-06-05_preliminary_public_survey_results.pdf.

Biggest Focus Area for Funding from the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund

Survey respondents were asked to identify their top three biggest focus areas for funding from the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund (ENRTF) from a list of 13 options.

Land, Wildlife, and Wildlife Habitat was the most important area for future funding with nearly 50% of respondents identifying it as a top priority (See Table C-1). It was the top priority for respondents from every region of the state and whether they were affiliated with an agency, organization, or program that works on issues related to the environment or natural resources or not. Air quality was a relatively low concern with only 7% of respondents considering it a top priority for funding from the ENRTF.

The relative priority of focus areas did differ slightly from region to region. Climate change was a bigger issue for respondents from the Metro region versus the rest of the state, while outdoor recreation is generally a more important issue in northern Minnesota. Agricultural practices are a bigger issue in the Southwest region of the state.

Whether a respondent was affiliated with an agency, organization, or program that works on issues related to the environment or natural resources did not generally change the top focus areas with a few notable exceptions. Respondents affiliated with environmental or natural resources agencies, organizations, or programs prioritized environmental justice and climate change more than unaffiliated respondents did. Unaffiliated respondents prioritized recycling, reuse, and other waste management, energy use and production, and air quality slightly more than respondents affiliated with environmental or natural resources agencies, organizations, or programs did.

*****LCCMR DRAFT*****

Table C-1. Which of the following do you think should be the biggest focus for funding from Minnesota’s Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund (ENRTF)?

Answer Choices	Responses	
Land, Wildlife, and Wildlife Habitat (includes birds, pollinators / insects, reptiles, mammals, and plants)	803	49%
Lakes, Rivers, and Other Aquatic Habitat (includes fish and other aquatic species)	591	36%
Climate Change	581	35%
Water Quality	504	31%
Outdoor Recreation (includes hiking or biking trails, boat ramps, and other facilities)	351	21%
Agricultural Practices	312	19%
Invasive Species	289	18%
Environmental Justice	215	13%
Energy Use and Production (includes energy efficiency and renewable energy)	212	13%
Water Availability (includes flooding, drought, and drinking water)	190	12%
Recycling, Reuse, and Other Waste Management	177	11%
Other (please specify)	141	9%
Air Quality	114	7%

Best Way Funding Could Be Used

Survey respondents were presented with seven different methods to address their top focus areas and asked to prioritize them from highest to lowest priority.

Restoring and enhancing land and water was the highest priority for respondents while constructing facilities and other infrastructure like trails, fishing piers, campgrounds, and solar panels was a lower priority (See Table C-2). Priorities were fairly consistent across Minnesota, although acquiring land was a lower priority in the Northeast and Southwest regions and ensuring equitable funding was a higher priority in the Southwest region. Priorities were the same whether someone was affiliated with an agency, organization, or program that works on issues related to the environment or natural resources or not.

Table C-2. What is the best way funding could be used to address the focus areas you selected previously? Rank from your highest (1) to your lowest (7) priority.

Answer Choices	Score	Ranking
Restore and enhance land and water.	5.15	1
Develop plans and designs for protecting, conserving, preserving, and enhancing natural resources, the environment, and outdoor recreation.	4.70	2
Acquire land for preservation, conservation, or outdoor recreation.	4.02	3
Increase education and public awareness.	3.93	4
Conduct research to better understand issues, measure progress on achieving outcomes, and develop new tools, practices, or solutions.	3.89	5
Ensure equitable funding distribution across all communities.	3.38	6
Construct facilities and other infrastructure like trails, fishing piers, campgrounds, and solar panels.	2.93	7

LCCMR DRAFT

Appendix D: Subject Matter Expert Survey Summary

The LCCMR Subcommittee on Strategic Planning conducted an online subject matter expert survey to gather input on what members of the public with specific expertise or experience working on environmental and natural resources issues thought were the most important goals and strategies for the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund (ENRTF). In addition, subject matter experts were asked for feedback on their experience with the Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources (LCCMR) funding process and how it could be improved.

The survey was open from April 3, 2024, to May 7, 2024. An email invitation to participate in the survey was sent to over 1,000 people with expertise or experience in that environment, natural resources, agriculture, or outdoor recreation, including:

- Current and past project managers
- Current and past applicants for ENRTF funding
- University and college faculty
- Federal, state, and tribal government professionals
- Professional associations
- Non-profit personnel

The subcommittee received 360 responses to the survey. Survey results were compiled and presented to the subcommittee members at relevant times during their discussions. Highlights are presented below. Additional tables and details can be found in the following presentations and documents:

[ENRTF Goals Presentation \(Subject Matter Expert Demographics and Goal Prioritization\)](#)

[Subject Matter Experts Ideas for Additional Goals](#)

[Subject Matter Expert Responses to How ENRTF Can Help Minnesota be a National Leader](#)

[ENRTF Strategies Presentation \(Subject Matter Expert Strategy Prioritization\)](#)

[Subject Matter Expert Ideas for Additional Strategies](#)

[LCCMR Goals and Strategies Presentation \(Subject Matter Expert Feedback on LCCMR Funding Process\)](#)

[Subject Matter Expert Comments on LCCMR Funding Process](#)

Goals Results

Subject matter experts were asked to rank seven goal statements from highest (1) to lowest priority (7). The goal statements were primarily developed by an expert panel during the 2019 strategic planning process with modifications made by the subcommittee.

Ensuring Minnesota's environment, natural resources, and communities are resilient in the face of climate change, land use changes, and extreme weather events was the overall highest priority for the subject matter experts (See Table D-1). This goal statement was in the top 2 for all experts, except respondents with expertise in aquatic habitat and management. Ensuring all Minnesotans have access to and take

*****LCCMR DRAFT*****

advantage of opportunities for culturally relevant and innovative connections to the lands and waters of Minnesota was the overall lowest priority. This goal statement was in the bottom 3 for all experts.

The area of expertise and affiliation of the respondents did appear to affect how they prioritized the goal statements. In general, experts prioritized goal statements related to their area of expertise higher than other goal statements, and there were slight differences in how experts prioritized the goals based on their affiliation. For example, experts from universities and colleges and non-profit organizations prioritized the goal related to resiliency higher than other experts. However, the top 4 goal statements and bottom 3 goal statements were the same for all experts regardless of affiliation.

Table D-1. The following goal statements were developed by a past group of Minnesota's environment and natural resources experts. Please rank these goals from more important for Minnesota to achieve (1) to less important (7).

Goal Statement	Score	Ranking
Minnesota's environment, natural resources, and communities are resilient in the face of climate change, land use changes, and extreme weather events.	5.06	1
Minnesota's water resources are better managed for both water quantity and quality, as a result of better understanding of the connections between surface water and groundwater.	4.86	2
Minnesota has healthy and diverse wildlife and plant populations that sustain and enhance the state's environment, economy, and quality of life.	4.55	3
Minnesota's public and private lands, including forests, grasslands, and agricultural lands, provide long-term benefits to fish, wildlife, and people.	4.17	4
Minnesota responds quickly and proactively to emerging environmental and natural resources issues.	3.20	5
Minnesota achieves reliance on nonpolluting, renewable energy in all sectors (including transportation, building, industry, agriculture, and others).	3.16	6
All Minnesotans, especially young people, have access to and take advantage of opportunities for culturally relevant and innovative connections to the lands and waters of Minnesota.	3.00	7

Subject matter experts were asked two additional questions related to goals. The first question was how the ENRTF could help Minnesota be a leader nationally and internationally on environmental and natural resources issues. The second question asked if there were any additional goals that should be considered.

The subcommittee received 271 responses to the first question and 189 responses to the second question. All responses can be found in the [national leader document](#) and the [additional goals document](#) compiled for the subcommittee. The most common terms found in those responses were fund, project, nature, environmental, resource, wildlife, habitat, water, land, quality, education, research, engagement, collaboration, support, youth, and equity. The following word cloud visualizations show these keywords.

*****LCCMR DRAFT*****

Strategies Results

Subject matter experts were asked to select the top two or three most important or effective strategies to address six of the seven goal statements. The strategies were primarily developed by an expert panel during the 2019 strategic planning process with modifications made by the subcommittee. The final rankings based on the survey results are presented in the tables below. In addition, subject matter experts were asked if there were any additional strategies that should be considered. All responses can be found in the [additional strategies document](#) compiled for the subcommittee.

The seventh goal statement related to emerging issues was developed in 2024 by the subcommittee, and there were no strategies from 2019 to present. Instead, subject matter experts were asked to provide strategies that would be most important or effective in achieving that goal. Response to that question are also included in the [additional strategies document](#).

Table D-2. Top strategies to achieve the goal: “Minnesota’s water resources are better managed for both water quantity and quality, as a result of better understanding of the connections between surface water and groundwater.”

Strategy	Selected	Rank
Research impacts of nutrients, agricultural runoff, and urban stormwater on surface water and groundwater quality and quantity, as well as opportunities to mitigate those impacts.	43.1%	1
Research and demonstrate innovative, market-based policies and partnerships that solve local water issues in both forest-based regions and agriculture-based regions.	28.1%	2
Evaluate the effectiveness of current management practices and past investments to improve water resources.	23.1%	3
Educate local officials on how to improve and protect water resources, including model projects and policies that can be emulated at all scales.	20.3%	4
Increase understanding of current and future weather and climate patterns, and how these align with anticipated water needs across Minnesota.	19.9%	5
Research, implement demonstrations, and develop incentives and policies related to holding back water and increasing evapotranspiration opportunities to prevent water pollution.	15.3%	6

*****LCCMR DRAFT*****

Table D-3. Top strategies to achieve the goal: “Minnesota’s environment, natural resources, and communities are resilient in the face of climate change, land use changes, and extreme weather events.”

Strategy	Selected	Rank
Support cities, counties, and watershed districts with developing climate resiliency and adaptation plans, and processes for funding and implementing those plans.	33.2%	1
Identify and promote workable, holistic, multi-benefit, diverse, and viable (e.g., economically and socially) solutions for storing more water on the land, through both engineered and natural solutions targeted at critical areas.	31.4%	2
Research effective water use scenarios – including modeling water scenarios, managing water on land, optimizing use to prevent overuse of groundwater, and improving water reuse and wastewater management – to identify improvements needed to ensure the state’s water resiliency and sustainability.	27.7%	3
Research and demonstrate market-based policies that are economically viable and help pay for the land use, conservation, and other practices needed to achieve climate resiliency and water resources protection, especially in agricultural areas.	26.6%	4
Compile existing research, identify gaps, and develop research to quantify land use and land cover changes, in order to identify restoration and protection needs to achieve sustainable natural systems.	24.8%	5
Use public open space to demonstrate climate change adaptation, mitigation, and prevention.	10.6%	6

Table D-4. Top strategies to achieve the goal: “Minnesota has healthy and diverse wildlife and plant populations that sustain and enhance the state’s environment, economy, and quality of life.”

Strategy	Selected	Rank
Research and manage species and ecosystems to effectively maintain, protect, and restore habitats and populations.	34.3%	1
Support and provide technical assistance to private landowners on cost-effective ways to develop and restore diverse, native habitat.	28.8%	2
Conserve additional lands and support management of currently protected lands.	27.3%	3
Monitor the biologic and environmental health of systems through high-quality research to support management of lands and waters.	22.1%	4
Evaluate the effectiveness of current management practices and past investments to sustain and enhance wildlife and native plant populations.	18.8%	5
Research plant, fish, and wildlife communities to inform management in relation to climate change.	10.0%	6
Research key issues and develop strategies to combat them (e.g., bird/insect crash).	7.8%	7

*****LCCMR DRAFT*****

Table D-5. Top strategies to achieve the goal: “Minnesota’s public and private lands, including forests, grasslands, and agricultural lands, provide long-term benefits to fish, wildlife, and people.”

Strategy	Selected	Rank
Promote, research, and evaluate best management practices (BMPs) on public and private lands, in order to provide long-term benefits to fish and wildlife.	26.2%	1
Research, develop, and demonstrate agricultural production processes and systems that are significantly less carbon-intensive and decrease the loss of nutrients into ground water and surface water.	20.3%	2
Enhance education and public outreach to change landscape and ecosystem norms.	17.3%	3
Develop innovative, market-based policies to make substantive conservation efforts financially feasible.	17.0%	4
Improve and demonstrate how working lands can be economically productive and good habitat.	15.1%	5
Preserve and protect the watersheds that are already in good shape.	14.4%	6
Research and demonstrate the practical value of regenerative agriculture.	13.3%	7
Develop and implement agricultural cropping systems with diverse crops that provide multiple benefits, including exploring markets and supply chain.	13.3%	7
Educate people through demonstration on the opportunity for public and private lands to slow and store water for multiple benefits (e.g., water quality, habitat, flood mitigation) as well as for carbon sequestration.	12.6%	9
Encourage landscape-level and eco-type planning, instead of parcel-level.	12.2%	10
Implement conservation actions that prioritize the needs of vulnerable, declining, poorly understood, and sensitive species.	11.8%	11
Prioritize projects that enlist the support of multiple agencies and organizations.	9.2%	12
Increase understanding and assessment of tradeoffs among different environmental and societal goals to improve decisions on public and private lands.	8.9%	13
Identify high-quality habitat, recreation open spaces, and other high-priority areas for action.	7.8%	14
Evaluate, prioritize, and demonstrate how working lands and renewable energy can be mutually beneficial.	7.0%	15

*****LCCMR DRAFT*****

Table D-6. Top strategies to achieve the goal: “All Minnesotans, especially young people, have access to and take advantage of opportunities for culturally relevant and innovative connections to the lands and waters of Minnesota.”

Strategies	Selected	Rank
Through partnerships between schools, environmental learning centers, and other community resources, provide evidence-based, engaging programs to bring students to outdoor experiences.	43.5%	1
Through collaborative efforts, provide curriculum, programs, and outdoor environmental events that teach K–12 students what public lands are, introduces them to public lands nearby, and encourages them to explore local public lands.	33.5%	2
Address the social, economic, and physical barriers to outdoor recreation through programs that encourage inclusivity and address inequities.	30.1%	3
Implement capital projects that develop culturally relevant, accessible, and resilient outdoor recreation facilities, infrastructure, and equipment rental programs that create innovative experiences (e.g., parks, trails, fishing piers, shoreline fishing areas, birding trails, shelters).	24.2%	4
Research people’s interests in outdoor recreation and understand barriers to participation.	13.4%	5
Assess programs, activities, and physical spaces for their accessibility and effectiveness; support changes to adapt and retrofit to welcome more people.	6.3%	6

Table D-7. Top strategies to achieve the goal: “Minnesota achieves reliance on nonpolluting, renewable energy in all sectors (including transportation, building, industry, agriculture, and others).”

Strategy	Selected	Rank
Incentivize the use of nonpolluting renewable energy in agriculture, industries, and commercial transportation.	37.7%	1
Demonstrate the ability and statewide potential to generate solar energy on perennially vegetated lands, reducing CO ² and water runoff, while making the enterprise economically viable.	28.4%	2
Fund energy efficiency improvements and renewable energy for rental properties, small businesses, and schools.	22.4%	3
Demonstrate community-scale, net-zero renewable energy systems.	21.3%	4
Encourage bundling renewable energy production and battery storage.	13.4%	5

LCCMR Funding Process Results

Subject matter experts were asked how much they agreed with eight statements related to the LCCMR funding process and provided an opportunity to comment on the process. Results from the first question

*****LCCMR DRAFT*****

are summarized below, and [comments on the LCCMR funding process](#) have been compiled in a separate document.

Subject matter experts generally had a favorable impression of LCCMR staff, LCCMR outreach efforts related to the request for proposals (RFP), how clear it was what projects are eligible for funding, the process for completing and submitting a proposal, and LCCMR reporting requirements (See Table D-8). Experts looked less favorably on the length of the process and the clarity, fairness, and transparency of the LCCMR evaluation, selection, and recommendation process.

Results varied slightly depending on if the subject matter expert had received or applied for ENRTF funding in the past and the type of organization with which they are affiliated. In general, experts from non-profit organizations reported less favorable impressions than experts affiliated with other groups. In addition, experts who had never received or applied for ENRTF funding generally had a less favorable impression of how well the LCCMR conducts RFP outreach efforts, how easy it is to complete a proposal, and how clear it is what projects are eligible for funding. Finally, experts affiliated with non-profit organization, universities, or colleges expressed less favorable impressions than other groups about the proposal evaluation, selection, and recommendation process.

Table D-8. How much do you agree with the following statements?

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree		Strongly Disagree	Weighted Average
			Disagree	Disagree		
LCCMR staff are helpful and easy to work with.	49%	36%	13%	2%	0%	1.68
The LCCMR does a good job in notifying potential applicants that funding is available.	41%	35%	15%	8%	1%	1.92
It is clear what projects are eligible for funding from the ENRTF.	26%	53%	13%	6%	1%	2.03
Completing and submitting a proposal to the LCCMR is reasonably simple and straightforward.	28%	46%	16%	8%	2%	2.09
Once funded, project reporting requirements are clear and straightforward.	26%	42%	26%	5%	1%	2.14
The LCCMR's process from proposal submission to fund availability is timely and efficient.	17%	42%	22%	15%	5%	2.5
The LCCMR process for recommending funding from the ENRTF is fair and transparent.	10%	30%	37%	15%	7%	2.78
It is clear how the LCCMR evaluates and selects projects to recommend for funding.	10%	33%	30%	21%	6%	2.8

*****LCCMR DRAFT*****

Survey Notes

The majority of subject matter experts responding to the survey had previously applied for ENRTF funding (81%) and received ENRTF funding (66%). Most experts were affiliated with an academic institution (32%), a non-profit organization (28%), a state government agency (18%), or a local government agency (13%). Experts with private (4%), tribal (4%), and federal affiliation (1%) represented a much smaller number of respondents. Respondents were able to indicate expertise in up to three areas, and a wide range of expertise was reported (See Table D-9).

Table D-9. In which of the following areas do you have expertise or experience related to environmental, natural resources, or outdoor recreation issues?

Expertise	
Water Quality	35%
Land and Wildlife Habitat and Management	28%
Climate Change	24%
Agricultural Practices	23%
Environmental Education	21%
Outdoor Recreation	20%
Invasive Species	17%
Aquatic Habitat and Management	13%
Forestry	11%
Other	11%
Energy	10%
Environmental or Civil Engineering	10%
Geology, Soils, and/or Mineral Resources	9%
Water Quantity	8%
Air Quality	5%
Recycling, Reuse, and Other Waste Management	4%

LCCMR DRAFT

Appendix E: Public Listening Session Summary

The LCCMR Subcommittee on Strategic Planning hosted five listening sessions to gather public input on the priorities for environmental and natural resources funding and preferred methods to address those priorities, particularly from members of the public who may not participate in online surveys. Listening sessions were held in the following locations and dates:

- March 26, 2024 (Virtual)
- April 26, 2024 (Amherst H. Wilder Foundation, St. Paul)
- May 3, 2024 (Central Lakes College, Brainerd)
- May 3, 2024 (Becker County Historical Society and Museum, Detroit Lakes)
- May 4, 2024 (Oblivion CoffeeBar & Mercantile, St. Cloud)

Invitations to all listening sessions were announced through a press release, posted to the LCCMR webpage and social media accounts, and sent to everyone on the LCCMR GovDelivery list. An invitation to the virtual listening session was included with the announcement of the public survey emailed to nearly 400 organizations across Minnesota, including environmental, natural resource, recreation, agriculture, energy, economic development, government, university and colleges, non-profits, for-profits, community, and tribal groups. For in-person sessions, emails were also sent to local leaders, state legislators, subject matter experts, and environmental and natural resources organizations in the listening session area.

Each listening session provided an opportunity for members of the public to learn more about the ENRTF and the LCCMR, interact with LCCMR members, and provide input. At the virtual and Brainerd listening sessions, participants heard a formal presentation about the ENRTF and LCCMR and then participated in small group discussions with LCCMR members. The St. Paul, Detroit Lakes, and St. Cloud sessions were held as open houses where members of the public could interact informally with LCCMR members and staff, view a presentation about the LCCMR and ENRTF, and provide written input. At all sessions, participants were prompted to answer three questions that paralleled questions on the public survey:

1. What are the biggest threats or needs related to Minnesota's environment or natural resources?
2. What do we need to do to address the threats facing Minnesota's environment and natural resources?
3. What is your future vision for Minnesota's environment and natural resources? What would success look like?

There were 101 participants in the five listening sessions. Participants included concerned citizens, local officials, state and local government agency personnel, researchers, and representatives from non-profit organizations. The compiled written comments and discussion notes from all the listening sessions can be found in the following document: [\[create link\]](#)