

**Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund
2012-2013 Request for Proposals (RFP)**

Project Title:

ENRTF ID: 027-B

Realizing County Forests' Full Potential Through Improved Inventory

Topic Area: B. Forestry/Agriculture/Minerals

Total Project Budget: \$ 1,294,000

Proposed Project Time Period for the Funding Requested: 3 yrs, July 2013 - June 2016

Other Non-State Funds: \$ 0

Summary:

Seven counties in Northern Minnesota working together to apply next generation forest inventory methods that address emerging issues and opportunities related to wildlife habitat, invasive species and improved forest productivity.

Name: Kathryn Fernholz

Sponsoring Organization: Dovetail Partners, Inc.

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Location

Region: NE, Central

County Name: Aitkin, Beltrami, Carlton, Clearwater, Crow Wing, Koochiching, Pine

City / Township:

_____ Funding Priorities	_____ Multiple Benefits	_____ Outcomes	_____ Knowledge Base
_____ Extent of Impact	_____ Innovation	_____ Scientific/Tech Basis	_____ Urgency
_____ Capacity Readiness	_____ Leverage	_____ Employment	_____ TOTAL _____%

PROJECT TITLE:

Realizing County Forests’ Full Potential Through Improved Inventory

I. PROJECT STATEMENT

A cornerstone of successful management is the use of up-to-date, high-quality information. Just as farmers must plan carefully in the spring for a successful outcome in the fall, forest land managers must plan the management of forest resources many years in advance to have the desired outcomes for wildlife, recreation, water quality and forest health in the future. Yet many of the forest inventory and data collection systems that are necessary for effective management are out-of-date (>20 years old) and do not include important pieces of information to address natural resource considerations. For example, ecological classification systems have not been incorporated and invasive species are not being reported. Missing information hinders management and our ability to realize the full potential for biodiversity and forest health. Without better forest inventory on these lands today, we will not realize tomorrow’s desired forest conditions.

This project is a collaborative effort between seven counties (Table 1) to improve forest inventories by incorporating important information and by using improved inventory strategies. The benefits of the project include better opportunities to support wildlife habitat, environmental values, invasive species control and forest health. Each county has made a commitment to the project through their land department and county boards. Each county will provide staff time and resources to support the improvement of their systems and the sharing of information across ownerships. The seven participating counties represent land managers that are in a position to participate in this project and that have current identified inventory needs. Over 95% of the participating county lands are third-party certified (i.e., FSC and SFI forest management certification). Improving forest inventory methods is an important part of being able to maintain certification of these lands.

Table 1. Northern Minnesota Land Manager Project Partners

Participating County	County Managed Public Land (acres)
Aitkin County Land Department	222,000
Beltrami County Land Department	150,000
Carlton County Land Department	72,000
Clearwater County Land & Forestry Department	90,000
Crow Wing County Land Services	103,000
Koochiching County Land & Forestry Office	286,800
Pine County Land Department	45,000
Total Acres	968,800

The project is not a one-size-fits-all approach. The partners will develop practices that are specific to the interests and opportunities of each county while improving opportunities to share data across private and public ownerships. The project will utilize inventory techniques and technologies that include existing software and hardware as well as incorporating innovative new “next generation” practices where they can improve efficiencies and provide multiple benefits (e.g., GIS, remote sensing, aerial photography, LiDAR). The project includes a review of diverse inventory systems to identify best practices and recent innovations. The project directly serves counties throughout Northern Minnesota and indirectly serves all Minnesotans who are interested in improved management of public forestlands so that we have the future forest we want and need.

The goal of the project is to support enhanced habitat management, ecological understanding, invasive species control and improved forest productivity. The direct outcomes will be:

- 1) an assessment of current inventory methods and best practices;
- 2) enhanced inventory practices for nearly 1 million acres of public land; and
- 3) sharing of results to inform replication, modification and full roll-out of improved inventory.

II. DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT ACTIVITIES

Activity 1: Identification of opportunities for improved inventory in the 7 counties Budget: \$120,000

Through meetings, site visits and email questionnaires, participating counties will provide information about current inventory practices and perceived strengths and weaknesses. Information about current practices used in Minnesota will be assembled in a common database to understand the data that are collected and the age and quality of current inventory information. Inventory practices used in other places will also be reviewed to identify best practices. Counties will identify priorities for improvements.

Outcome	Completion Date
1. Current practices information collected	January 2014
2. Summary report of assessment results prepared	June 2014

Activity 2: Selection of improved inventory methods for each of the 7 counties Budget: \$75,000

Specific strategies and tactics for improving forest inventories will be proposed for each county. They will address county-specific opportunities as well as opportunities for improvement across ownerships. Improvement of the inventories will focus on habitat management, ecological understanding, invasive species control and improved forest productivity.

Outcome	Completion Date
1. Delivery of report that identifies strategies and tactics for improved forest inventory practices for each participating county and across ownerships	December 2014

Activity 3: Piloting improved inventory practices in each of the 7 counties Budget: \$1,050,000

Piloting activities will be evaluated and reported. The 7 participating counties will receive funds (e.g., \$1.00/acre or about \$150,000 per county) to support next generation inventory practices.

Outcome	Completion Date
1. Selection of improved inventory practices to be piloted	January 2015
2. Piloting of inventory practices	June 2016
3. Reporting the results of the piloting activities	June 2016

III. PROJECT STRATEGY

A. Project Team/Partners

The project manager is Kathryn Fernholz of Dovetail Partners. Kathryn is a forester and will have responsibilities for managing the budget and project outcomes. Participating counties that will receive funds and contribute staff time and additional resources are listed in Table 1. Additional Partners that will receive funds: Applied Ecological Services will provide technical services (e.g., inventory design, data analysis, mapping and GIS technologies).

B. Timeline Requirements

The project timeline is July 2013 – June 2016 (3 years)

C. Long-Term Strategy and Future Funding Needs

Typical traditional inventory costs are approximately \$10/acre so the grant request represents about 10% of the total potential inventory costs of approximately \$10,000,000. There are opportunities to reduce these total costs as a result of this project and the application of new technologies and efficiencies.

2012-2013 Detailed Project Budget

Project Title: *Realizing County Forests' Full Potential Through Improved Inventory*

Applicant: *Dovetail Partners*

IV. TOTAL ENRTF REQUEST BUDGET 3 years

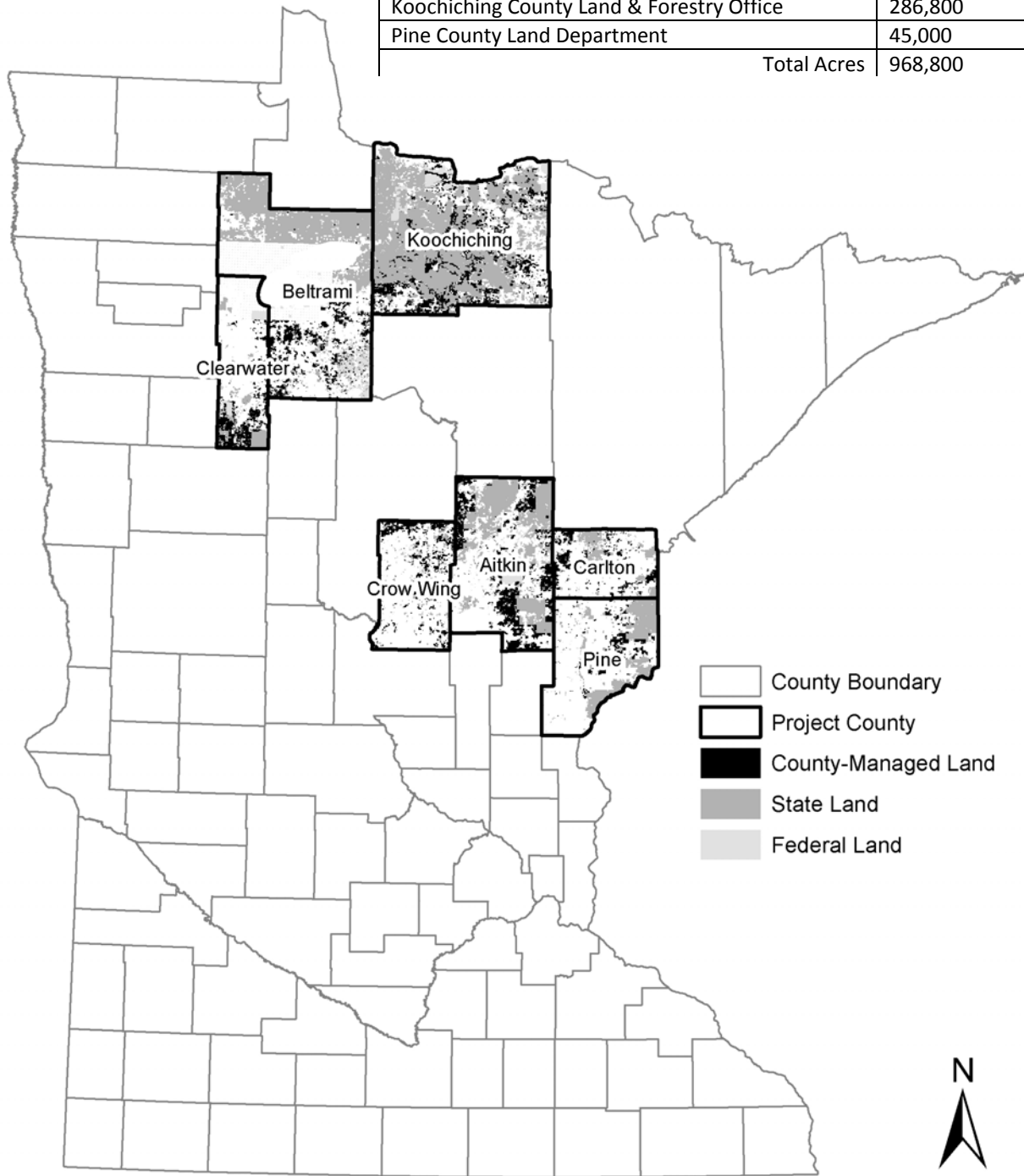
BUDGET ITEM	AMOUNT
Personnel: Dovetail Partners, Matt Frank 30% salary for project support; Sarah Stai 20% for technical services. Additional staff to be determined for project management and technical services	\$ 125,500
Contracts: County Land and Forestry Department contracts for inventory development and piloting (Including additional service providers to be determined by competitive bids) Approximately \$1.00 per acre or about \$150,000 will be made available to each of the 7 counties.	\$ 1,050,000
Contracts: Applied Ecological Services contract for review of current practices and inventory development and design technical services (e.g., GIS, data analysis, mapping and evaluation)	\$ 111,000
Travel: To project area for meetings between personnel, contractors and project partners	\$ 7,500
TOTAL ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES TRUST FUND \$ REQUEST =	\$ 1,294,000

V. OTHER FUNDS

SOURCE OF FUNDS	AMOUNT	Status
Other Non-State \$ Being Applied to Project During Project Period: Other pending non-state funding requests made by Dovetail Partners	\$ 350,000	<i>Pending</i>
Other State \$ Being Applied to Project During Project Period: <i>N/A</i>	\$ -	
In-kind Services During Project Period: In-kind services to be provided by Dovetail Partners and County Land Departments	\$ 125,000	
Remaining \$ from Current ENRTF Appropriation (if applicable): <i>N/A</i>	\$ -	
Funding History: <i>N/A</i>	\$ -	

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2012 LCCMR Proposal

Project Management for Grant Administering Organization and Main Contact Person:

Kathryn Fernholz, Dovetail Partners

Kathryn is a forester by training and has worked on development and forest management issues in a range of roles. With a consulting firm, Kathryn was a member of the environmental services department where her work included natural resource inventories, comprehensive planning, environmental impact assessments and the use of Geographic Information Systems (GIS). While working for the Community Forestry Resource Center, Kathryn developed and managed a group certification project for family forests and worked to increase local capacity to provide forest management and marketing services that are compatible with certification standards. Kathryn is also an experienced forest certification lead auditor.

Kathryn has been a leader within the forestry community in the Upper Midwest through her service as Chair of the Minnesota Society of American Foresters and her appointment to the Minnesota Forest Resources Council. Kathryn served as a member of the Advisory Board for the Blandin Foundation's Vital Forests/Vital Communities Initiative, and currently serves on the Minnesota DNR's Stewardship Committee, and the Forests for the Future Committee. She is a member of the Board of Directors for the Minnesota Environmental Partnership, the Forest Guild, Renewing the Countryside and the College of Food, Agricultural and Natural Resource Sciences Alumni Society. In 2011, Kathryn joined the NSF Joint Committee on Dimensional Stone Sustainability and became a member of the Board of Directors for the Sustainable Furnishings Council.

Kathryn has a B.S. in Forest Resources from the University of Minnesota, College of Natural Resources and also studied at the College of Saint Benedict in St. Joseph, MN and Sheldon Jackson College in Sitka, Alaska. Kathryn is a life-long Minnesotan with family roots in Lac qui Parle County.

Organizational Description

Dovetail Partners (www.dovetailinc.org) provides authoritative information about the impacts and trade-offs of environmental decisions, including consumption choices, land use, and policy alternatives. Established in 2003, Dovetail is a highly skilled team that fosters sustainability and responsible behaviors by collaborating to develop unique concepts, systems, models and programs. Dovetail Partners is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation. Dovetail excels at solving complex business problems and helping responsible firms to become successful. We also help regions define programs that increase the job creation and the job quality of resource-based industries.

Mission Statement:

To provide authoritative information about the impacts and trade-offs of environmental decisions, including consumption choices, land use, and policy alternatives.