

**Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund  
2020 Request for Proposals (RFP)**

---

**Project Title:**

**ENRTF ID: 267-G**

Turning Back to Rivers: Environmental and Recreational Protection

---

**Category:** G. Land Acquisition for Habitat and Recreation

**Sub-Category:**

---

**Total Project Budget: \$** 3,803,600

**Proposed Project Time Period for the Funding Requested:** June 30, 2023 (3 yrs)

**Summary:**

This project will help communities acquire priority land along the Mississippi, St. Croix, and Minnesota Rivers, and their tributaries, protecting the environment and water quality while creating much-needed recreational opportunities.

**Name:** DJ Forbes

**Sponsoring Organization:** The Trust for Public Land

**Job Title:** Project Manager

**Department:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** 2610 University Avenue, Suite 300

St. Paul MN 55407

**Telephone Number:** (651) 999-5325

**Email** dj.forbes@tpl.org

**Web Address:** https://www.tpl.org/our-work/minnesota

---

**Location:**

**Region:** Statewide

**County Name:** Chippewa, Crow Wing, Goodhue, Renville, Rice, Stearns, Washington

**City / Township:** Multiple

---

**Alternate Text for Visual:**

Turning Back to Rivers: Environmental and Recreational Protection - Overview Map and Individual Parcel Maps

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



**PROJECT TITLE: Turning Back to Rivers: Environmental and Recreational Protection**

**I. PROJECT STATEMENT**

Working hand in hand with river communities, The Trust for Public Land (TPL) will protect land through fee title acquisition and increase access on and near Minnesota’s great rivers. Our partnership is based on existing local area plans and we will protect approximately 400 acres of high priority, high quality natural resource land: lands with high recreational value, lands that address access gaps, lands that maximize scenic and habitat benefits, and lands that help to protect from high water and flooding.

Thousands of Minnesotans live within mere miles of the state’s iconic Mississippi, St. Croix, and Minnesota Rivers, and their major tributaries, and cannot access and enjoy the rivers or the land adjacent to them. In the Land of 10,000 Lakes, our rivers are under-valued and increasingly inaccessible natural assets. Historically, these rivers have been predominately used for industry and commerce, and then dumping and waste. Communities viewed these natural amenities as opportunities for commercial development rather than spaces for the public to enjoy. Reality has thankfully shifted. Communities throughout the state now understand the environmental and recreational benefits their rivers offer as nearby natural assets ripe for protection and public enjoyment. Communities are eager to partner to protect these dynamic riverside assets.

These communities have created plans and identified and prioritized opportunities for the protection of public open space, but they lack funding, capacity, and the real estate know-how to effectively achieve their goals. TPL brings expertise in complex real estate transactions, and we have the proficiencies needed to help communities efficiently solve their specific natural resource needs.

In partnership with local and county government, we will protect approximately 400 acres through fee title acquisition of high priority, high quality natural resource land. These properties have been prioritized in state, regional, and local natural resource and recreation plans, reflecting strong community support. Our efforts will focus on river communities throughout the state by protecting land that they are excited to manage and that will provide multiple outdoor recreational opportunities. These lands are not eligible for other protection funding due in large part to hunting requirements.

By permanently protecting these lands, multiple benefits are achieved:

- Protection of high quality natural resource land for community enjoyment, wildlife habitat, and water quality
- Resilience due to improved ecosystem connectivity of native animal and plant populations (including “Species in Greatest Conservation Need”) in the face of climate change and invasive species
- Increased access to various outdoor recreation opportunities along Minnesota’s rivers, improving the connection between people and Minnesota’s natural resources
- Additional buffers from high water and flooding

**II. PROJECT ACTIVITIES AND OUTCOMES**

**Activity 1:** *Protect Strategic Lands: Fee title acquisition of high priority lands along the Mississippi, St. Croix, and Minnesota Rivers, and their tributaries*

**Description:** Eligible parcels (see attached acquisition parcel list) have been identified by communities in local plans as priorities for recreational value, high quality natural resources, lands that address access gaps, scenic qualities, and/or water protection. Not all parcels can be protected at the same time. Prioritization factors include adjacency to already protected land; landowner willingness to sell for conservation purposes; final local decision making on protection; and



**Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund (ENRTF)  
2020 Main Proposal Template**

other due diligence. TPL will conduct all due diligence activities including appraisals, environmental reviews, title investigations, and survey work. Acquired land will be conveyed to our public agency partner (local units of government or MN DNR) for long-term stewardship, maintenance, and if called for, park and trail development. Priority parcels include:

- **Cottage Grove Kiln/Mississippi River:** Adjacent to city-owned Settlers Island, Urmann Ries site, and Moores Park, the acquisition of this parcel would add to the river access trail vision planned by the National Park Service and the City of Cottage Grove. This site is proposed to provide community access to the river for educational and recreational opportunities, and includes the historic Grey Cloud Lime Kiln, which is on the National Register of Historic Places. This is a high priority for Cottage Grove.
- **Byllesby Park Addition/Cannon River:** Located between the main park area and the upper park area, acquisition of these parcels would provide additional riverside protection and access, and nearly double the size of this unique recreational area located on the Cannon River at Lake Byllesby. This is a high priority for Goodhue County.

**ENRTF BUDGET:** \$3,803,600

Outcome	Completion Date
1. Approximately 400 acres, and 1.5 mile of shoreline, protected for public use and enjoyment through fee title acquisition	6/30/23

**III. PROJECT PARTNERS:**

**A. Partners receiving ENRTF funding**

Agency partners, local and state, may receive land acquisition costs applicable to the real estate transaction, and IDP costs for initial site development.

**B. Partners NOT receiving ENRTF funding**

The Trust for Public Land will partner with cities, counties and the MN DNR to acquire and permanently protect land. Other partners may include shore associations, citizen groups and other NGOs. Partners specifically ask for our help because they lack staff, resources and capacity to conduct this work. Related to this proposal, the likely long term stewards may include: City of Brainerd, City of St. Cloud, City of Cottage Grove, Goodhue County, Rice County, Renville County, Washington County, Chippewa County and the MN DNR.

**IV. LONG-TERM IMPLEMENTATION AND FUNDING:** Strengthening the connection between land and people is vital in ensuring the long-term stewardship of Minnesota’s natural resources. The protection activities included in this proposal are complementary to TPL’s current work in the Mississippi, St. Croix and Minnesota River watersheds to restore, protect, and enhance Minnesota's wetlands, prairies, forests, and habitat for fish, game, and wildlife. The parcels listed in this proposal are generally not a good fit for other protection funding due in large part to hunting requirements. Rather, protecting these parcels for resource based recreational needs, addressing access gaps areas, and inspiring river-oriented communities is a demand that can be uniquely met by ENRTF/LCCMR funding. The Trust for Public Land views this proposal as a long-term strategy, and will continue its work as long as critical habitat and natural resources based recreation opportunities remain unprotected and in danger of degradation and loss. Land protection is not the final step in helping communities turn back to rivers; however, it is a critical early step needed before long-term restoration, stewardship, and programming of these riverfront areas can take place. These activities will be led and funded by the long-term steward of the resource.

**V. TIME LINE REQUIREMENTS:** 3 years; until June 30, 2023

**VI. SEE ADDITIONAL PROPOSAL COMPONENTS ATTACHED**

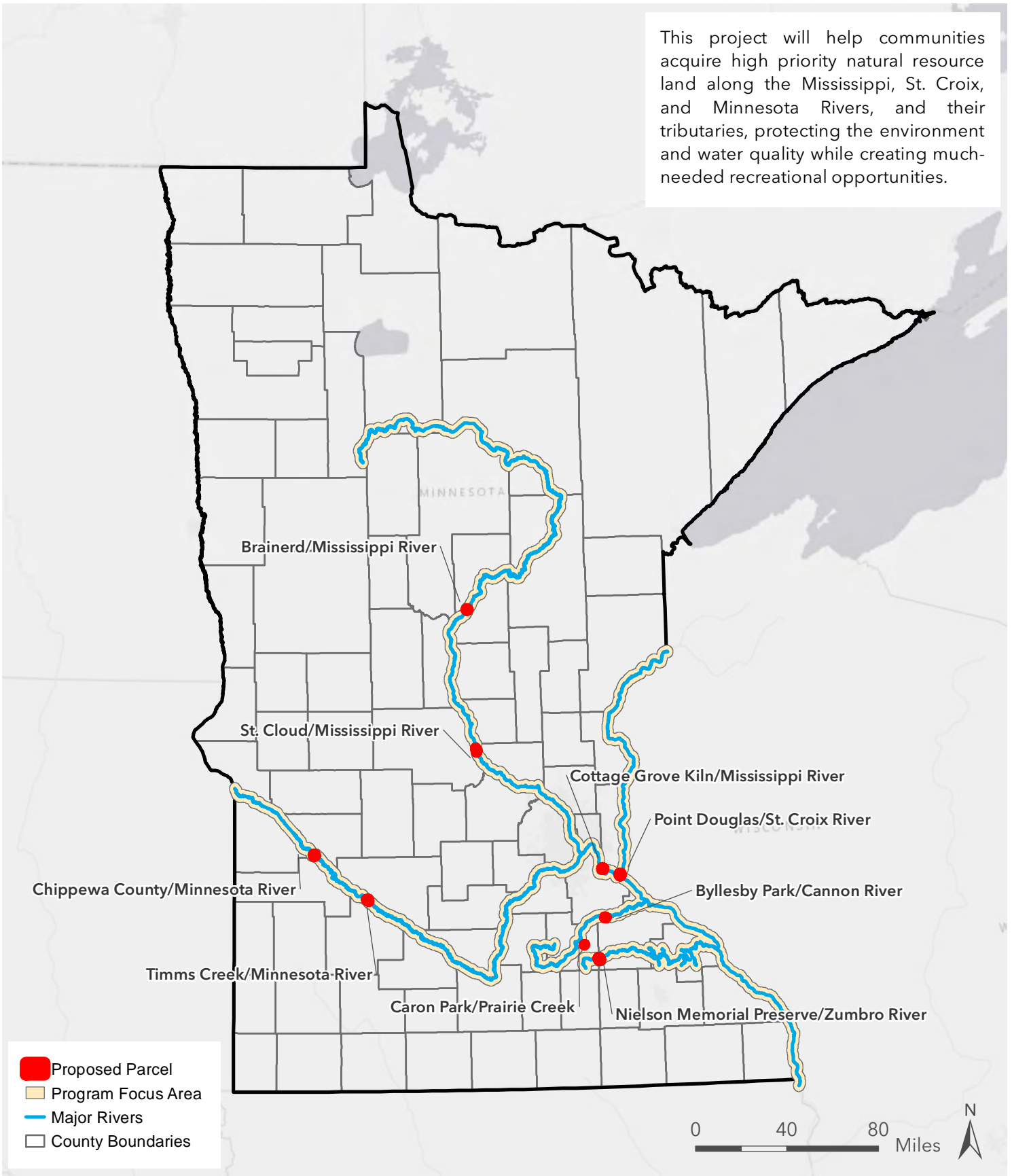
Attachment A: Project Budget Spreadsheet  
 Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund  
 M.L. 2020 Budget Spreadsheet



Legal Citation:  
 Project Manager: DJ Forbes  
 Project Title: Turning Back to Rivers: Environmental and Recreational Protection  
 Organization: The Trust for Public Land  
 Project Budget: \$3,803,600  
 Project Length and Completion Date: 3 years, June 30, 2023  
 Today's Date: April 15, 2019

ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES TRUST FUND BUDGET		Budget	Amount Spent	Balance
<b>BUDGET ITEM</b>				
<b>Personnel (Wages and Benefits)</b>		\$ 180,000	\$ -	\$ 180,000
Land Protection Staff, \$162,000 (68% salary, 32% fringe), .32 FTE each year for 3 years				
Legal Staff, \$18,000 (68% salary, 32% fringe), .04 FTE each year for 3 years				
<b>Professional/Technical/Service Contracts</b>		\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
<b>Equipment/Tools/Supplies</b>		\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
<b>Capital Expenditures Over \$5,000</b>		\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
<b>Fee Title Acquisition</b>				
<i>Acquisition Capital Assumptions: We will close 5 transactions and investigate 3 others</i>		\$ 3,391,100	\$ -	\$ 3,391,100
<b>Easement Acquisition</b>		\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
<b>Professional Services for Acquisition</b>				
<i>Professional Services Assumptions: We will close 5 transactions and investigate 3 others</i>		\$ 122,500	\$ -	\$ 122,500
<b>Printing</b>		\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
<b>Travel expenses in Minnesota</b>		\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
<b>Other</b>				
<i>Initial Development Costs</i>		\$ 90,000	\$ -	\$ 90,000
<i>DNR Land Acquisition Costs</i>		\$ 20,000	\$ -	\$ 20,000
<b>COLUMN TOTAL</b>		<b>\$ 3,803,600</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ 3,803,600</b>
<b>SOURCE AND USE OF OTHER FUNDS CONTRIBUTED TO THE PROJECT</b>				
	<b>Status (secured or pending)</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Spent</b>	<b>Balance</b>
<b>Non-State:</b> <i>The Trust for Public Land will fundraise private funds to cover the necessary indirect costs and travel costs related to this project.</i>		\$ 128,400	\$ -	\$ 128,400
<b>State:</b>		\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
<b>Local:</b> <i>Includes land acquisition capital, initial development costs, operation and maintenance, and in-kind staff time.</i>		\$ 500,000	\$ -	\$ 500,000
<b>Other ENRTF APPROPRIATIONS AWARDED IN THE LAST SIX YEARS</b>				
	<b>Amount legally obligated but not yet spent</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Spent</b>	<b>Balance</b>
<i>ENRTF M.L. 2015, Chp. 76, Sec. 2, Subd. 09f</i>		\$ 360,000	\$ 750,000	\$ 651,048
				\$ 98,952

This project will help communities acquire high priority natural resource land along the Mississippi, St. Croix, and Minnesota Rivers, and their tributaries, protecting the environment and water quality while creating much-needed recreational opportunities.



# Parcel Overview Map



Turning Back to Rivers: Environmental and Recreational Protection

Attachment C:  
 Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund  
 M.L. 2020 Acquisition/Restoration Parcel List Spreadsheet  
 Project Title: *Turning Back to Rivers: Environmental and Recreational Protection*  
 Legal Citation:  
 Project Manager: *DJ Forbes*  
 Organization: *The Trust for Public Land*  
 M.L. 2020 ENRTF Request: \$3,803,600  
 Project Length and Completion Date: 3 years, June 30, 2023  
 Today's Date: 4/15/2019



#	Acquisition or Restoration Parcel Name	Geographic Coordinates (preferably from the center of the parcel) Format: [Deg.]° [Min.]' [Sec.]" [Hemis.]		Estimated Cost	Estimated Annual PILT Liabilities	County	Site Significance (please include what ecosystem (e.g., prairie, forest, wetland, savanna) is represented as well as the ecological significance, site importance, conservation value, and public benefits)	Activity Description (e.g. fee title acquisition, conservation easement acquisition, site preparation, restoration)	# of Acres	# of Shoreline Miles	Type of Landowner (private individual or trust, non-profit organization, for-profit entity)	Proposed Fee Title or Easement Holder (if applicable)	Status of work (e.g. engaged in landowner negotiations, no longer in consideration, restoration activities underway)
		Latitude	Longitude										
1	Brainerd/Mississippi River	46 21'26N	94 12'34W	\$ 254,000	NA	Crow Wing County	Located within the heart of Brainerd, acquisition of these parcels would allow the City to create a park and access the river.	Fee Title Acquisition	3.2	0.1	Private	City of Brainerd	NA
2	Byllesby Park/Cannon River	44°30'25.5"N	92°57'49.7"W	\$ 600,000	NA	Goodhue County	Located between the main park area and the upper park area, acquisition of these parcels would provide additional riverside protection and access, and nearly double the size of this unique recreational area located on the Cannon River at Lake Byllesby. This is a high priority for Goodhue County.	Fee Title Acquisition	117	1	Private	Goodhue County	NA
3	Caron Park/Prairie Creek	44°20'51.9"N	93°10'16.0"W	\$ 400,000	NA	Rice County	Located along Prairie Creek and abutting Caron Park, the acquisition of these parcels will provide additional acreage and access to this important Rice County park.	Fee Title Acquisition	70	0.1	Private	Rice County	NA
4	Chippewa County/Minnesota River	44°54'29.3"N	95°41'57.1"W	\$ 140,000	\$ 1,050	Chippewa County	Increases access to Minnesota River, adjacent to County Property.	Fee Title Acquisition	40	1	Private	Chippewa County or MN DNR	NA
5	Cottage Grove Kiln/Mississippi River	44°47'54.5"N	92°58'38.9"W	\$ 320,000	NA	Washington County	Adjacent to city-owned Settlers Island, Urmann Ries site, and Moores Park, the acquisition of this parcel would add to the river access trail vision planned by the National Park Service and the City of Cottage Grove. This site is proposed to provide community access to the river for educational and recreational opportunities, and includes the historic Grey Cloud Lime Kiln, which is on the National Register of Historic Places. This is a high priority for Cottage Grove.	Fee Title Acquisition	7.4	0.2	Private	City of Cottage Grove	NA
6	Nielson Memorial Preserve/Zumbro River	44°15'43.8"N	93°02'17.0"W	\$ 450,000	NA	Goodhue County	Directly abutting the recently created Nielson Memorial Preserve, the protection of these parcels will provide access and additional acreage for this Big Woods refuge located on the North Fork of the Zumbro River.	Fee Title Acquisition	105	0	Private	Goodhue County	NA
7	Point Douglas/St. Croix River	44°45'23.2"N	92°48'52.4"W	\$ 835,900	NA	Washington County	Located on the St. Croix River between Carpenter Nature Center to the north and Point Douglas County Park to the south, the acquisition of this parcel would provide fee-title to a trail corridor (addition to St. Croix Valley Regional Trail) and would preserve remnants of mesic oak forest and additional riparian and upland habitat for a variety of wildlife and bird species of greatest conservation need.	Fee Title Acquisition	41	0.5	Private	Washington County	NA
8	St. Cloud/Mississippi River	45 30'44N	94 08'41W	\$ 766,000	NA	Stearns County	Located on the St. Croix River between Carpenter Nature Center to the north and Point Douglas County Park to the south, the acquisition of this parcel would provide fee-title to a trail corridor (addition to St. Croix Valley Regional Trail) and would preserve remnants of mesic oak forest and additional riparian and upland habitat for a variety of wildlife and bird species of greatest conservation need.	Fee Title Acquisition	133	0.75	Private	City of St. Cloud or Stearns County	NA
9	Timms Creek/Minnesota River	44°38'17.5"N	95°11'40.1"W	\$ 1,000,000	\$ 7,500	Renville County	Identified in the Minnesota River Valley Recreation and Conservation Master Plan, the protection of these parcels will conserve unique and sensitive natural resources while providing increased recreational opportunities.	Fee Title Acquisition	190	0.75	Private	Renville County or MN DNR	NA

NOTES: Our proposal assumes that we will successfully protect 5 of these parcels while investigating 3 others.

## Attachment D. Additional Work Plan Information for Acquisition, Easements, and Restoration

### Acquisition/Restoration Information:

The information to be included in this section is to help fulfill specific requirements pertaining to fee title acquisition, conservation easement acquisition, and restoration efforts completed using Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund dollars. More detailed information explaining these requirements is available in separate documents that are available on the "Project Manager Info" page of the LCCMR website under "Requirements for ENRTF Land Acquisitions and Restorations": [http://www.lccmr.leg.mn/pm\\_info/manager\\_info\\_index.html](http://www.lccmr.leg.mn/pm_info/manager_info_index.html). Please fill out the relevant portions below. Please delete any sections that do not apply to your project. For example, if your project only involves fee title acquisition, answer all five items under fee title acquisition and then delete all of the text for the portions relating to conservation easement acquisition and restoration.

### Fee Title Acquisition

1. Describe the selection process for identifying and including proposed parcels on the parcel list, including explanation of the criteria and decision-making process used to rank and prioritize parcels.
  - The proposed parcels have been identified and prioritized in state, regional and local natural resource and recreation plans, as well as through agency and community conversations. These parcels are regarded as priorities for recreational value, high quality natural resources, land that address access gaps, scenic value, and/or water protection. Other prioritization factors are presence of biodiversity significance on site, adjacency to already protected land, level of local support, immediacy of threats, whether we see a pathway to obtain full funding to successfully complete the acquisition, whether the permanent steward will be able to adequately manage the property and fund on-going maintenance, and landowner willingness and timing needs.
2. List all adopted state, regional, or local natural resource plans in which the lands included in the parcel list are identified. Include a link to the plan if one is available.
  - The parcels included in our proposal have been identified through state, county, and local plans as being priorities – plans include:
    - [Minnesota Scientific and Natural Areas Program Strategic Land Protection Plan](#)
    - [Minnesota DNR Strategic Conservation Agenda: 2015-2025](#)
    - [MN State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan 2014-2018](#)
    - [Washington County's Land and Water Legacy Program](#)
    - [Mississippi River Partnership Plan for the City of Brainerd](#)
    - [Minnesota Great River Road Corridor Management Plan](#)
    - [LCCMR – Six-Year Strategic Plan for MN's Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund](#)
    - [Goodhue County Byllesby Park Master Plan](#)
    - [Goodhue County Nielsen Memorial Preserve Master Plan](#)
    - [Minnesota River Valley Recreation and Conservation Master Plan](#)
3. For any parcels acquired in fee title, a restoration and management must be prepared. Summarize the components and expected outcomes of restoration and management plans for parcels acquired by your organization, how these plans are kept on file by your organization, and overall strategies for long-term plan implementation, including how long-term maintenance and management needs of the parcel will be financed into the future.
  - Once parcels have been acquired and conveyed to the long-term steward, initial site development and restoration of the property will begin. The Trust for Public Land will work with the long-term steward to complete a restoration and management plan (including how these activities will be funded), and implementation of that plan will be completed in the years following acquisition. Estimated costs for initial development costs of parcels are included in this proposal.

4. *For each parcel to be conveyed to a State of Minnesota entity (e.g., DNR) after purchase, provide a statement confirming that county board approval will be obtained.*
  - The Trust for Public Land will work with local units of government on the acquisition of these parcels. If required, County Board approval will be obtained.
5. *If applicable (see M.S. 116P.17), provide a statement confirming that written approval from the DNR Commissioner will be obtained 10 business days prior to any final acquisition transaction.*
  - Written approval from the DNR Commissioner will be obtained 10 business days prior to any final acquisition transaction.





**Organization Description and Project Manager Qualifications**

Since 1972, The Trust for Public Land (TPL) has protected more than 3.5 million acres, created or transformed 5,000 new public places across America, forged hundreds of active partnerships, and developed more than 2,000 miles of trails across the U.S. TPL has also helped states and local communities generate more than \$68 billion in new public funds for parks and open space.

Our strategic focus on improving outdoor access reflects learning from more than forty years protecting public land to advance our “Land for People” mission. We have heard from communities across America that access to the outdoors is central to a life well-lived, something that should be treated as a basic human right. It is well-documented that there are many other benefits communities gain from America’s lands and waters beyond just recreational access—benefits like clean water, forestry and farming, economic diversity through outdoor businesses, improved mental and physical health, stronger community ties, and spiritual inspiration. Both public and private land conservation can truly be a “triple-bottom line” investment, providing social, economic and environmental benefits for our country.

As John Muir wrote of his travels in Alaska, “In every walk with nature one receives far more than he seeks.” At TPL, we want everyone in America to experience the gifts of nature in their lives.

Below are brief biographies of The Trust for Public Land staff which are anticipated to be involved with this project.

This project will be managed by **DJ Forbes, Project Manager, The Trust for Public Land.** DJ has been with TPL for four years and supports multiple TPL initiatives; helping to create parks and protect land for people in both urban and rural areas. DJ manages all aspects of real estate transactions including initial research and outreach; negotiating contracts; advocating for and securing financing; and coordinating due diligence work. Prior to his work at TPL, DJ was a Senior Planner for the Active Living program at Hennepin County. He also served as a Project Manager with the City of Chelsea Department of Planning and Development in Massachusetts. DJ has a MA in Urban and Environmental Policy and Planning from Tufts University and a BA in Geography and History from DePaul University.

**Bob McGillivray, Senior Project Manager, The Trust for Public Land.** Bob has been with TPL for fifteen years. He works directly with landowners, public agency partners, and community members to protect land throughout the state of Minnesota for public use and enjoyment. He manages all aspects of real estate transactions including conducting property research; negotiating contracts; advocating for and securing financing; and coordinating due diligence activities. Prior to joining TPL, Bob was a partner at the law firm of Oppenheimer Wolff & Donnelly with a broad commercial practice. He also served as a law clerk for the Honorable Edward J. Devitt, United States District Court Judge; a Special Assistant Attorney General with the Minnesota Attorney General’s Office; and a legal intern with the United Nations and the United States Attorney’s Office for the Southern District of New York. Bob graduated summa cum laude and Phi Beta Kappa from the University of Minnesota and received his law degree from New York University. He also studied at Stirling University in Scotland and the University of Copenhagen, Denmark. Bob’s volunteer activities have included serving on the Board of the Legal Aid Society of Minneapolis and on the Board of Minnesota Waters, a nonprofit conservation organization that promotes responsible stewardship of water resources.

