

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

Project Title:

ENRTF ID: 277-G

Crow Wing County Community Natural Area Acquisition

Category: G. Land Acquisition for Habitat and Recreation

Sub-Category:

Total Project Budget: \$ 405,000

Proposed Project Time Period for the Funding Requested: June 30, 2022 (2 yrs)

Summary:

Crow Wing County acquisition of three private parcels adjacent to the historic fire tower property will allow for diverse recreational opportunities while protecting wildlife habitat and preventing forest fragmentation.

Name: Ryan Simonson

Sponsoring Organization: Crow Wing County

Job Title: Environmental Services Supervisor

Department: _____

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Brainerd MN 56401

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Email ryan.simonson@crowwing.us

Web Address: www.crowwing.us

Location:

Region: Central

County Name: Crow Wing

City / Township: Pequot Lakes

Alternate Text for Visual:

The map shows the location of the three private parcels in relation to the County parcel and the historic fire tower.

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



PROJECT TITLE: Crow Wing County Community Natural Area Acquisition

I. PROJECT STATEMENT

Crow Wing county acquired the historic Pequot Lakes area fire tower and surrounding 40-acres from the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) in November of 2018. The county would like to acquire an additional 69-acres in order to manage the forest and provide an interpretive hiking trail that interprets the history of the fire tower and forestry practices in Crow Wing County. Both private land owners are willing to sell their property to the county in the spirit of this area becoming a community accessible historic interpretation site that elevates the role of working forestry in the region. This would be a place where people could see a piece of community history as well as enjoy the natural resources that Central Minnesota has to offer.

The fire tower parcel owned by Crow Wing county is located along State Highway 371 in Pequot Lakes and is an official stop for the Paul Bunyan Scenic Byway bike corridor. This area is easily accessible and connected to other recreational activities. The site is an attraction for tourists who visit lake country, local residents and community groups to utilize as an educational, environmental and historical resource.

The current condition of the property is forested with a mixture of coniferous and deciduous trees including pines, spruce, maple, oak, ash, aspen, and birch, among other species. The site also contains deciduous shrubs such as smooth sumac, dogwood, elderberry, and a wide range of herbaceous groundcover plants. The parcels adjacent are also forested and contain similar species. Pequot Lakes schools use this site for outdoor education and would benefit from a larger interpretive forest outdoor classroom. The recently decommissioned DNR ranger station (tower site) with its local and regional historic value lead to the tower becoming listed on the National Historic Lookout Register.

This site already has a small parking lot and picnic area for visitors to use as well as one maintained hiking trail to the tower. With the addition of 69 surrounding acres of forested land this would become a larger complex to support educational, historic and recreational uses for the community. The timing of the county acquisition and the willingness of neighboring landowners to support this proposal, make this an important window of opportunity to develop on an excellent public asset.

II. PROJECT ACTIVITIES AND OUTCOMES

Activity 1 Title: Acquire adjacent land

Description: An appraisal of the approved parcels will be conducted and negotiations with the two private land owners will be conducted. The property will then be transferred to Crow Wing county and within 60 days of the transaction the county will provide a report to the LCCMR.

ENRTF BUDGET: \$405,000

| Outcome | Completion Date |
|--|------------------------|
| <i>1. Appraise approved parcels</i> | <i>August 2020</i> |
| <i>2. Transaction of properties</i> | <i>December 2020</i> |
| <i>3. Report provided to the LCCMR</i> | <i>January 2021</i> |



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Activity 2 Title: Forest management

Description: Crow Wing county will conduct a selective timber harvest on newly acquired lands surrounding the Pequot Lakes fire tower for forest management as well as invasive species control if identified.

ENRTF BUDGET: \$0

| Outcome | Completion Date |
|--|------------------------|
| 1. <i>Timber harvest on newly acquired lands</i> | <i>Summer 2021</i> |
| 2. <i>Invasive species control (if identified)</i> | <i>Summer 2021</i> |

Activity 3 Title: Develop public use amenities

Description: Create interpretive walking trails and install a kiosk near the fire tower with information on the history of the site and post appropriate signage along trails.

ENRTF BUDGET: \$0

| Outcome | Completion Date |
|---|------------------------|
| 1. <i>Create forest interpretive walking trail</i> | <i>Fall 2021</i> |
| 2. <i>Post signage on new county forestry interpretation area</i> | <i>Fall 2021</i> |

III. PROJECT PARTNERS AND COLLABORATORS:

- Crow Wing County

IV. LONG-TERM IMPLEMENTATION AND FUNDING:

The funds received from this grant will be used to acquire 69-acres of land around the Pequot Lakes fire tower to create a historic interpretive site. After the land has been transferred to the county, a trail will be created, a selective timber harvest will take place and the county will perpetually maintain this community resource. The perpetual cost of maintenance of the site will be the responsibility of Crow Wing county.



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

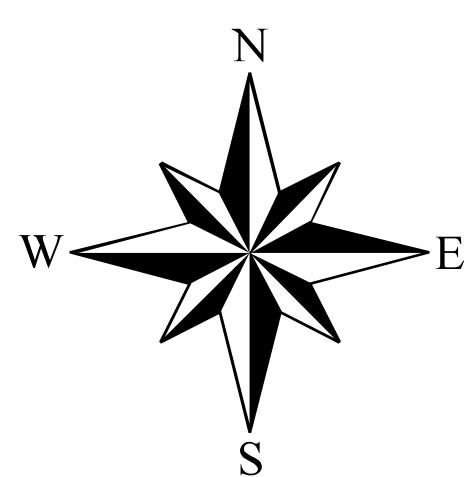
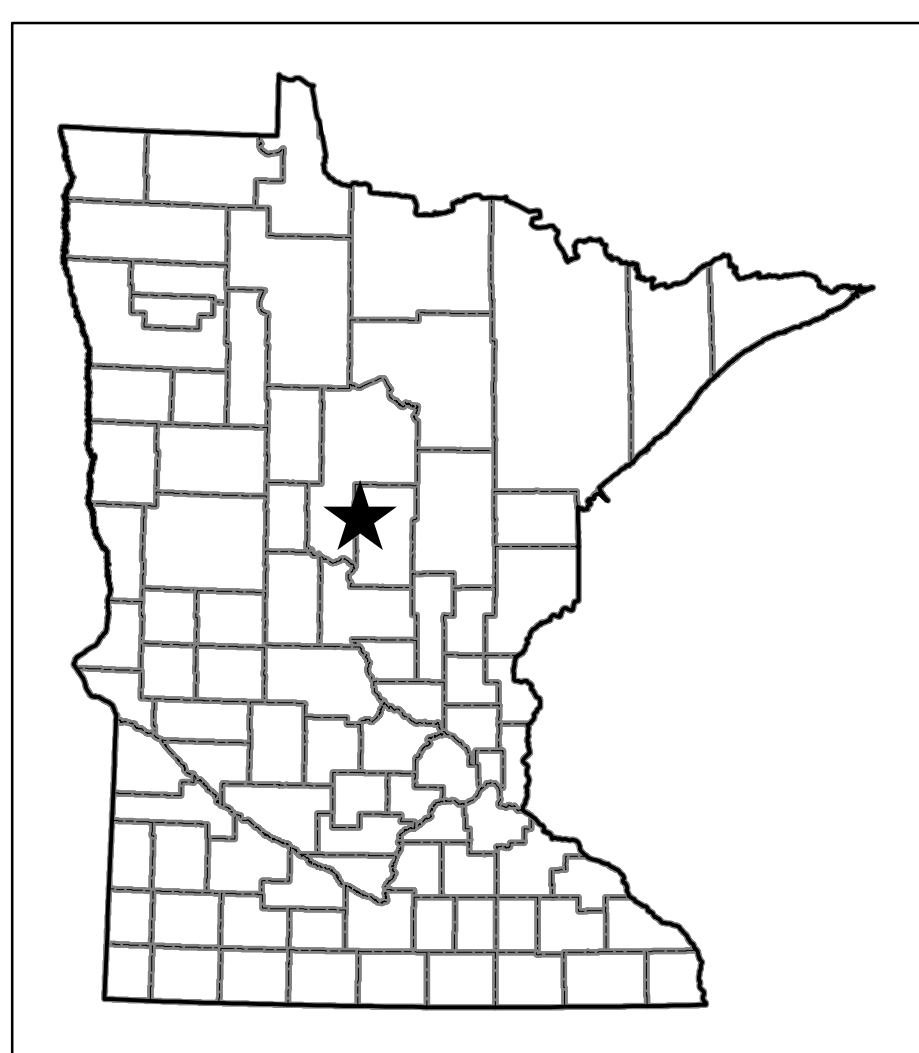
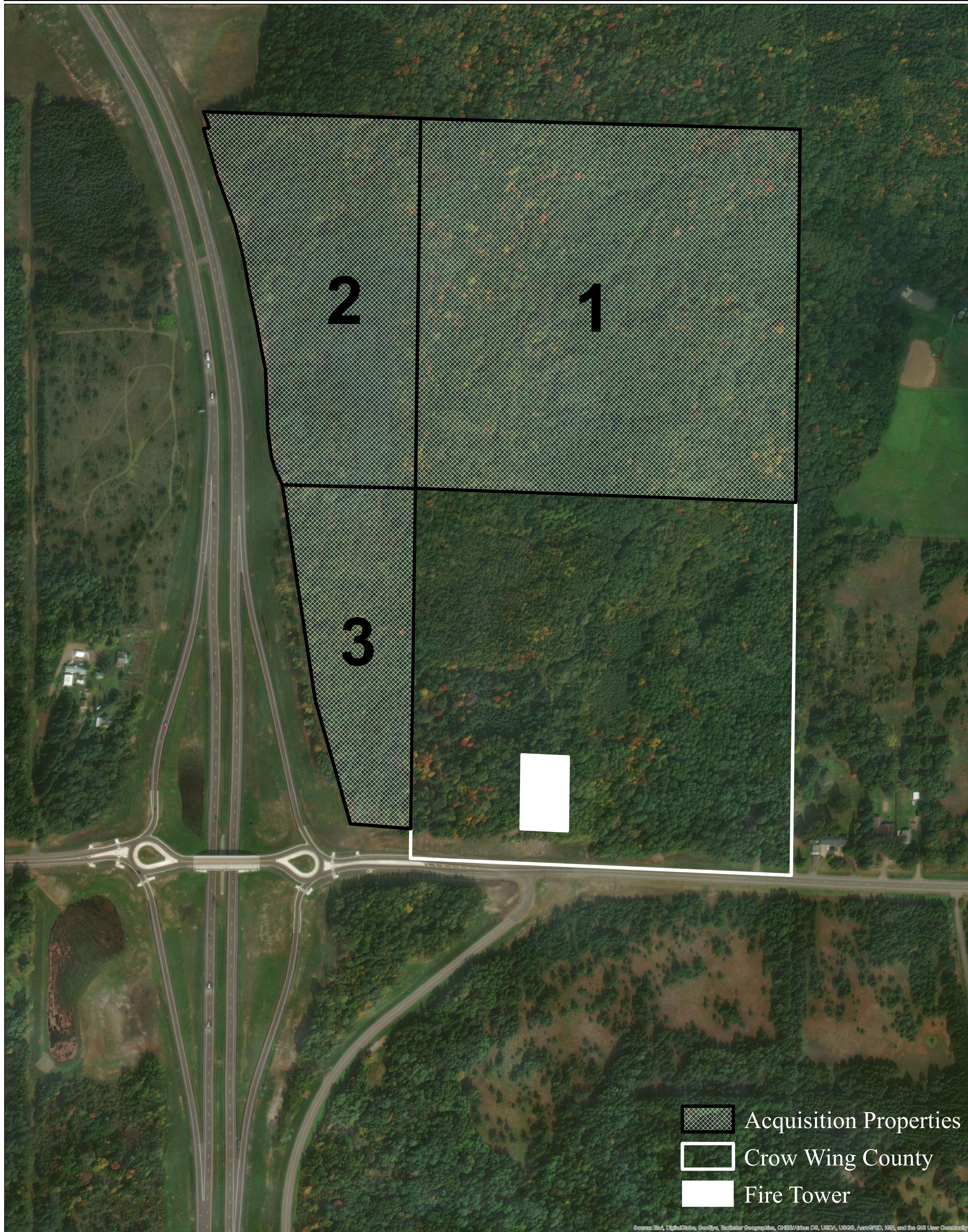


Legal Citation:
 Project Manager: Ryan Simonson
 Project Title: Crow Wing County Community Natural Area Acquisition
 Organization: Crow Wing County
 Project Budget: \$405,000
 Project Length and Completion Date: 1.5 years, November 30, 2021
 Today's Date: April 15, 2019

| ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES TRUST FUND BUDGET | Budget | Amount Spent | Balance |
|--|-------------------|--------------|-------------------|
| BUDGET ITEM | | | |
| Personnel (Wages and Benefits) | \$ - | \$ - | \$ - |
| Professional/Technical/Service Contracts | | | |
| | \$ - | \$ - | \$ - |
| Equipment/Tools/Supplies | | | |
| | \$ - | \$ - | \$ - |
| Capital Expenditures Over \$5,000 | | | |
| | \$ - | \$ - | \$ - |
| Fee Title Acquisition | | | |
| <i>69 acres, 3 parcels. Two parcels currently owned by Canniff, and one owned by Boberg.</i> | \$ 395,000 | \$ - | \$ 395,000 |
| Easement Acquisition | | | |
| | \$ - | \$ - | \$ - |
| Professional Services for Acquisition | | | |
| <i>Closing Costs. Two separate closings (one for Canniff parcels, and one for Boberg parcel)</i> | \$ 10,000 | \$ - | \$ 10,000 |
| Printing | | | |
| | \$ - | \$ - | \$ - |
| Travel expenses in Minnesota | | | |
| | \$ - | \$ - | \$ - |
| Other | | | |
| | \$ - | \$ - | \$ - |
| COLUMN TOTAL | \$ 405,000 | \$ - | \$ 405,000 |

| SOURCE AND USE OF OTHER FUNDS CONTRIBUTED TO THE PROJECT | Status (secured or pending) | Budget | Spent | Balance |
|---|---|---------------|--------------|----------------|
| Non-State: | | \$ - | \$ - | \$ - |
| State: | | \$ - | \$ - | \$ - |
| In kind: | | \$ - | \$ - | \$ - |
| Other ENRTF APPROPRIATIONS AWARDED IN THE LAST SIX YEARS | Amount legally obligated but not yet spent | Budget | Spent | Balance |
| | | \$ - | \$ - | \$ - |

Proposed Crow Wing County Natural Area



Attachment C: Parcel List Spreadsheet

Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund

M.L. 2020 Acquisition/Restoration Parcel List Spreadsheet

Project Title: Crow Wing County Community Natural Area Acquisition

Legal Citation:

Project Manager: Ryan Simonson

Organization: Crow Wing County

M.L. 2020 ENRTF Appropriation:

Project Length and Completion Date: 1.5 years, November 30, 2021

Today's Date: April 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 | Parcel #: 29011420000009 | 46° 36' 27.8532" N | 94° 17' 42.7848" W | \$155,000 | \$ - | Crow Wing | Mixed forest, natural and cultural education | Fee title acquisition | 41 | 0 | Private individual | Crow Wing County | Engaged in landowner negotiations |
| 2 | Parcel #: 290113100A00009 | 46° 36' 28.3320" N | 94° 17' 59.9244" W | \$110,000 | \$ - | Crow Wing | Mixed forest, natural and cultural education | Fee title acquisition | 18 | 0 | Private individual | Crow Wing County | Engaged in landowner negotiations |
| 3 | Parcel #: 290113400A00009 | 46° 36' 15.7536" N | 94° 17' 59.6940" W | \$130,000 | \$ - | Crow Wing | Mixed forest, natural and cultural education | Fee title acquisition | 10 | 0 | Private individual | Crow Wing County | Engaged in landowner negotiations |
| 4 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 5 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 6 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 7 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 8 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 9 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 10 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

NOTES:

Attachment D. Additional Work Plan Information for Acquisition, Easements, 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.

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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.

Crow Wing County Forest Resources Plan:

<http://mn-crowwingcounty2.civicplus.com/DocumentCenter/View/8899/Crow-Wing-Forest-Plan-2015-FINAL?bidId=>

Minnesota Forest Resources Council: North Central Landscape Plan

https://mn.gov/frc/docs/NC_Landscape_Plan.pdf

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.

Restoration and Management Plan

- I. This Restoration and Management Plan is for the Crow Wing Forest North property with the following legal description:
 - i. Northwest Quarter of the Southeast Quarter (NW $\frac{1}{4}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$), Northeast Quarter of the Southwest Quarter (NE $\frac{1}{4}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$) Except Part to Totem Products, and the Southeast Quarter of the Southwest Quarter (SE $\frac{1}{4}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$) Except the West 225 Feet Thereof, Section Eleven (11), Township One Hundred Thirty-Six (136), Range Twenty-Nine (29), Crow Wing County, Minnesota. ("The Property")
- II. This document is intended to satisfy the grant requirement that there be a restoration and management plan for lands acquired with the grant.
- III. The Property will be managed in compliance with the Forest Resources Plan for the Tax-Forfeited Lands of Crow Wing County (2015) which can also be found on line at <http://www.crowwing.us/DocumentCenter/View/8899/Crow-Wing-Forest-Plan-2015-FINAL?bidId=>.
- IV. Initial plans for the property include the following:
 - a. Removal of any deer stands still located on the property.
 - b. Creating interpretive walking trails.
 - c. Post signage on new interpretive walking trails

- V. It is anticipated that initial restoration activities a, b, and c will be completed by September 1, 2021. It is estimated that the initial restoration activities will cost approximately \$3,000 and will be paid for out of Crow Wing County funds.
 - VI. Ongoing restoration activities will be completed in compliance with the County Forest Resources Plan and may include a timber harvest of old, declining tree species on the property.
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.

Not applicable.

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.

Not applicable



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

I. PROJECT MANAGER QUALIFICATIONS

Crow Wing County is certified under the Sustainable Forestry Initiative, which is a third-party certification agency that performs rigorous audits each year to ensure sustainable forest management is being practiced on the 105,000 acres of public lands managed by the County. Crow Wing County is the sponsor of over 1,000 miles of designated trail systems, including 790 miles of snowmobile trails, 177 miles of multi-use off highway vehicle trails, 32 miles of cross-country ski trails, and 31 miles of non-motorized hunter/hiking trails. Crow Wing County also manages 117 acres of designated park facilities, including 2 islands on the Whitefish Chain of Lakes which include several campsites and miles of hiking trails through old growth forests, the Milford Mine Park which is a memorial located on the site of Minnesota's worst mining disaster that occurred on February 5, 1924, the South Long Lake Community Park which includes a fishing pier and picnic area, and of course the recently acquired Pequot Lakes Fire Tower which the County plans to make improvements and open for public use in the near future. Over the past decade, Crow Wing County has made recreation a top priority, and has proven its ability to develop and manage multiple park and trail systems.

II. ORGANIZATION DESCRIPTION

Crow Wing County is located in central Minnesota. Their vision; to be Minnesota's favorite place. Crow Wing County will achieve its vision by undertaking this mission: To be a leader among Minnesota Counties in providing best in class professional natural resource management that support local economies, protects water and wildlife resources and provides diverse recreational opportunities. (See Crow Wing County Forest Resources Plan).

