Overview: January 1, 2007—December 31, 2008

The period between January 1, 2007 and December 31, 2008 was the first biennium since what was formerly the Legislative Commission on Minnesota Resources (LCMR) was reorganized into the Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources (LCCMR) with the addition of citizen members to the commission. During this period, the LCCMR:

- Issued two Requests for Proposals (RFP) to conduct their selection process for funding recommendations to the 2008 Legislature and 2009 Legislature (the process for recommendations to the 2007 Legislature was conducted prior to January 1, 2007).
- Submitted and received passage of two funding recommendations bills—one each to the 2007 Legislature and 2008 Legislature—providing $46.3 million to 143 natural resources projects around the state (the recommendations bill to the 2009 Legislature was submitted after December 31, 2008).
- Developed a 6-year strategic plan for the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund.
- Funded and received the Statewide Conservation and Preservation Plan.
- Visited natural resources sites around the state.
- Gathered public input and heard from numerous natural resources experts from both the public and private sector.
- Received final reports from a total of 95 completed projects begun in 2003 (2), 2005 (86), 2006 (6), and 2007 (1).
- Continued support for activities protecting and enhancing Minnesota’s natural resources and providing benefit over an extended period of time.
2008: Projects Funded (MN Laws 2008, Chapter 367, Section 2)

During the 2007-2008 biennium, funding was provided to 143 projects around the state protecting Minnesota's air, land, water, fish, wildlife, and other natural resources.

- Approximately $23.4 million was appropriated to 72 individual projects around the state.
- **Land Acquisition:** ~$12 million is allowing for a combination of fee-title and easement acquisition of ~3,400 acres of land to protect forests, wetlands, and other habitat for human and animal benefit.
- **Land Restoration:** ~$2.5 million is allowing for restoration activities—including soil preparation, native vegetation installation, and exotic and invasive species removal—to be performed on ~12,900 acres.
- **Natural Resource Planning, Inventory, and Analysis:** ~$5.7 million is allowing for efforts providing planning, inventory, and/or analysis of natural resources to obtain critical information and guide relevant decisions and efforts over time.
- **Natural Resource Research:** ~$1.2 million is allowing for research advancing our knowledge and providing recommendations to address issues in the areas of climate change, energy production, wildlife and habitat, and water resources.
- **Environmental Education and Outreach:** ~$1.2 million is allowing for efforts to advocate and outreach efforts to foster increased citizen involvement of key environmental issues and facilitate better communication and understanding in natural resource planning, protection, and management.

2007: Projects Funded (MN Laws 2007, Chapter 30, Section 2)

- Approximately $22.9 million was appropriated to 71 individual projects around the state.
- **Land Acquisition:** ~$12.7 million is allowing for a combination of fee-title and easement acquisition of ~10,400 to protect forests, prairies, wetlands, and other habitat for human and animal benefit.
- **Land Restoration:** ~$1.8 million is allowing for restoration activities—including soil preparation, native vegetation installation, and exotic and invasive species removal—to be performed on 6,200 acres.
- **Natural Resource Inventory and Analysis:** ~$4.1 million is allowing for inventory and analysis of natural resources to obtain critical information and guide relevant decisions and efforts over time.
- **Natural Resource Research:** ~$3 million is allowing for research advancing our knowledge and providing recommendations to address issues in the areas of invasive species, water resources, and energy.
- **Administration:** ~$1.3 million for FY 2008-2009 LCCMR administration ($1,278,000) and DNR project contract management ($73,000).
Projects Completed: January 1, 2007—December 31, 2008

Between January 1, 2007 and December 31, 2009 a total of 95 projects funded through the LCCMR process reached completion. The majority of these were projects begun in 2005 and 2006.

Major accomplishments resulting from the projects completed include:

• Foundational natural resource data acquired pertaining to soils, species distribution, ecology, and land cover around the state.
• Expansion of parks and trails around the state by nearly 3,000 acres.
• Protection of more than 6,000 acres of habitat through fee-title and easement acquisition.
• Habitat restoration activities performed on more than 7,500 acres.
• Research and analysis furthering goals for invasive species control, water quality, and renewable energy.
• More than 160 sub-grants provided to facilitate local conservation and outdoor recreation efforts around the state.
• Planning and outreach efforts on sustainable natural resource uses and practices in the areas of energy, recreation, working lands, and water resources.

Highlights of Projects Completed or Underway

Statewide Conservation and Preservation Plan [ML 2006: completed]: Collaborative public/private effort between more than 125 experts that evaluated Minnesota’s natural resources, identified key issues affecting them, and made recommendations for long-term strategies to conserve and protect them.

MN County Biological Survey [ML 2005: completed; ML 2007, ML 2008: underway]: Ongoing, county-by-county effort to identify significant natural areas and to collect and interpret data on the distribution and ecology of plants and animals throughout the state.


Control of Common Carp [ML 2005, ML 2008: underway]: Breakthrough research into new and better options for controlling one of the most damaging invasive fish species in Minnesota because of its effects on water quality in lakes and rivers.

Metro Conservation Corridors (MeCC) and Minnesota Habitat Conservation Partnership (HCP) [ML 2005: completed; ML 2007, ML 2008: underway]: Partnerships of conservation organizations in the metro area and outstate that combine efforts to restore, enhance, and conserve critical land and habitat around the state.

MN County Geologic Atlas [ML 2007, ML 2008: underway]: Ongoing, county-by-county effort to map the location, size, boundaries, and vulnerability of the state’s groundwater to support wise use and protection of groundwater.

Perennial Biofuels Research [ML 2007, ML 2008]: Innovative research into the ability of perennial plants to provide raw material for bio-energy while simultaneously providing wildlife habitat, pollutant capture, and greenhouse gas reduction.

Parks, Trails, and Open Space [ML 2005: completed; ML 2007, ML 2008: underway]: Numerous, ongoing efforts expanding state and local outdoor recreation opportunities throughout the state.

LCCMR: 2009-2010 and Beyond

• In addition to recommendations currently before the 2009 Legislature, the LCCMR will continue its annual funding recommendations process, including recommendations to be made to the 2010 Legislature.
• In response to the recently passed Clean Water, Land, and Legacy Amendment, the LCCMR will give consideration to the unique and strategic role it can play in the protection and enhancement of Minnesota’s natural resources and the ways in which its future activities can best complement and assist with initiatives to be supported by these new funds.
• The LCCMR will continue to use the Statewide Conservation and Preservation Plan as a “living document” and will continue support for efforts expanding, adapting, updating, and enhancing the plan.
• Public outreach on behalf of the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund will be expanded with the launch of a public-oriented website featuring information and education about projects funded and benefits provided to Minnesota by way of the Trust Fund.
Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources (LCCMR)

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About LCCMR

The LCCMR is made up of 17 members (5 Senators, 5 Representatives, 5 citizens appointed by the governor, and one citizen appointed by each the Senate and the House). The function of the LCCMR (formerly LCMR) is to make funding recommendations to the Minnesota State Legislature for special environment and natural resource projects, primarily from the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund. These projects help maintain and enhance Minnesota’s environment and natural resources. The LCCMR developed from a program initiated in 1963. Since 1963, over $600 million has been appropriated to more than 1,250 projects recommended by the Commission to protect and enhance Minnesota’s environment and natural resources.

Commission Members (Jan 1, 2007—Dec 31, 2008)
Sen. Ellen Anderson
Alfred Berner
Jeff Broberg
Rep. Lyndon Carlson
Sen. Satveer Chaudhary
Rep. Ron Erhardt
Sen. Dennis Frederickson
Nancy Gibson
David Hartwell
John Herman
John Hunt
Mary Mueller
Sen. Pat Pariseau
Rep. Tom Rukavina,
Rep. Kathy Tingelstad
Sen. Jim Vickerman
Rep. Jean Wagenius


Over the past two years, the LCCMR engaged in numerous activities that informed its strategic planning, the priorities of its RFPs, and the projects it recommended for funding.

Natural resource sites around the state were visited:
- 2007 included a visit to northeastern MN to examine issues surrounding sustainable forest management and forest easements; a visit to western MN to examine issues pertaining to prairies, shallow lake ecology, alternative energy, and conservation easements.
- 2008 included a visit to north central MN to examine issues relating to peatland ecology, climate change, forestry, outdoor recreation, and shoreland management; a visit to southeastern MN to learn more about Mississippi River management, prairie and forest protection, and groundwater movement, contamination, and use; visits to multiple metro area locations to gather information on issues including stream restoration and bioenergy.

Seminars and presentations by experts were heard:
- 2007 included topics pertaining to natural resources data, invasive species, forest fragmentation, and native prairies.
- 2008 included topics pertaining to land use practices, transportation, climate change, invasive species, land and aquatic habitat, and energy.

Public input was gathered through:
- Online public survey pertaining to prioritization of Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund expenditures.
- Participation in forums for gathering public input on the Statewide Conservation and Preservation Plan.
- Participation in a workshop that brought legislators, state agency representatives, scientists, and citizens from around the state together with LCCMR members to think strategically about the future of MN.

LCCMR members talking with Mike Carroll and Kent Skaar of DNR at Shingobee Island near Walker, MN—LCCMR site visit, 08/13/08.