

For Immediate Release

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**LCCMR SELECTS CONSULTING TEAM TO PREPARE
STATEWIDE CONSERVATION AND PRESERVATION PLAN**

A public/private partnership consulting team, lead by the new University of Minnesota Institute on the Environment, was approved by unanimous vote on December 20th by the Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources (LCCMR) to prepare the Statewide Conservation and Preservation Plan.

The Legislature and the Governor approved a \$300,000 appropriation for the LCCMR to issue a request for proposal and select a consultant to prepare the statewide conservation and preservation plan.

The plan states that by combining the strengths of the University of Minnesota and private sector consulting expertise that they will **“develop a plan for Minnesota’s resources that is based on sound science, through analysis and public outreach, and that can be effectively implemented.”**

The plan is to address the constitutional language of the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund to preserve, protect and enhance the state’s air, land, water, fish, wildlife and other natural resources (outdoor recreation). The selected team includes a number of University faculty members who are national leaders in their fields. The team is already very familiar with the issues in Minnesota and will be able to work with the public to identify the issues, make recommendations and to implement the plan. As a Land Grant University, a number of faculty members are already doing similar work. The team will be able to leverage this work by adding it to the plan. The team also includes experienced professionals from the consulting firms of CR Planning and DSU/Bonestroo Natural Resources. State agencies have already indicated they will lend their expertise to the planning effort. In addition the non-profit group Campaign for Conservation which has been advocating for a statewide plan has pledged its cooperation.

State Representative Kathy Tingelstad, who is a Co-Chair of the LCCMR and a member of the selection advisory committee said, **“The talent of this team can help the LCCMR develop a long term plan that can really change the direction of how Minnesota manages its natural resources. It will help preserve the best areas, restore degraded areas and conserve other areas. With this project, I’m confident that our children and grandchildren will live in and enjoy a high quality natural environment with clean water and clean air.”**

Other members of the LCCMR are also enthusiastic about participating in the preparation of the plan. Several members are looking forward to using the findings and recommendations of the plan in their newly designated legislative roles. This includes, Senator Ellen Anderson as Chair of the Senate Environment and Natural Resources Finance Committee, Representative Jean Wagenius, as Chair of the House Environment and Natural Resources Finance Committee, and Senator Satveer Chaudhary as Chair of the Senate Environmental Policy Committee.

The plan will:

- Review and analyze the existing plans and build upon them to prepare the new plan.
- Identify current, emerging and future issues and trends affecting Minnesota's resources.
- Prioritize issues that should be addressed.
- Provide implementation strategies to address the issues.
- Provide general cost and benefit analysis of proposed strategies.
- Identify bench marks to measure and evaluate progress.

A selection advisory committee set up by the LCCMR made a unanimous recommendation of the selected team from among three well qualified applicants. The committee included six LCCMR members and four technical advisors each from public agency, academic, non-profit and the private sectors.

A preliminary plan is to be prepared by June, 2007 with a final plan by June, 2008.

The proposal to prepare the plan can be reviewed on the LCCMR website <http://www.lcmr.leg.mn/lcmr.htm>

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Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources (LCCMR)

The LCCMR is made up of 17 members (5 Senators, 5 Representatives and 5 citizen 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 legislature for natural resource projects from the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund. The Trust Fund is funded by a portion of the state lottery proceeds. These projects help maintain and enhance Minnesota's natural resources.

The LCMR developed from a program initiated in 1963. Prior to June 1, 2006, over \$525 million has been appropriated to approximately 1,214 projects recommended to protect and enhance Minnesota's natural resources.