

# LEGISLATIVE-CITIZEN COMMISSION ON MINNESOTA RESOURCES (LCCMR)



## Overview: January 1, 2007—December 31, 2008

### Special points of interest:

- 2007-2008 was the first biennium following reorganization into a commission of legislators and citizens.
- \$46.3 million was recommended and approved to go toward 143 natural resources projects around the state (ML 2007, ML 2008).
- For FY 2010, an additional \$26.1 is being recommended to fund 66 projects around the state.
- LCCMR heard from numerous public and private sector natural resources experts and visited natural resources sites around the state.

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.



Prickly pear cacti growing on rare rock outcrop near Flora Township, Renville County, MN—LCCMR site visit, 07/11/07.

- 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.

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## LCCMR Process

The LCCMR makes annual funding recommendations to the MN legislature for special environment and natural resources projects, primarily from the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund. These recommendations are the product of a competitive, multi-step proposal and selection process.

Each year a Request for Proposals (RFP) is issued for selected funding priorities based on a 6-year strategic plan and ongoing information gathering activities, including expert-led issue seminars and visits to natural resource sites around the state.

The RFP is open to everyone with innovative ideas for natural resources projects with a distinct public benefit.

The LCCMR reviews, evaluates, and ranks all proposals submitted. A selection of the highest ranked proposals are invited to present before the LCCMR. Finally, based on the total dollars available, a subset of the proposals are chosen to recommend to the legislature.

The funding recommendations go before the MN House and Senate in the form of a bill, and upon passage the bill goes to the Governor to be signed into law.

Funding becomes available to projects beginning July 1 of the next fiscal year.

The LCCMR has oversight over projects funded. Projects must have a work program approved, provide ongoing project updates, and deliver a final report upon project completion.

In response to the three RFPs issued for 2007, 2008, and 2009, a total of 428 proposals requesting a combined \$264.6 million were received and, from those, a total of 209 projects were recommended for some portion of the \$72.4 million available.

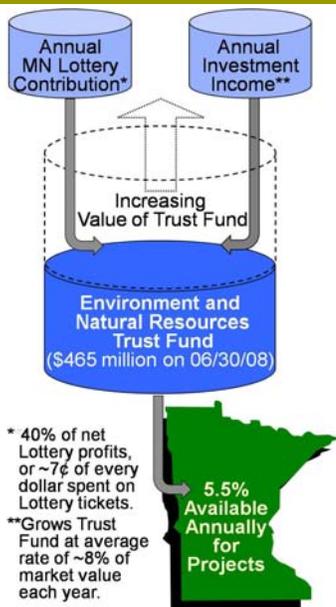


Figure: Inputs and Expenditures from the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund.

## 2009: Project Recommendations (to begin July 1, 2009)

Approximately \$26.1 million is being recommended to fund 66 individual projects around the state to begin July 1, 2009.

*Natural Resource Inventory and Planning:* ~\$7.9 million to allow for efforts to obtain critical information and guide relevant decisions and efforts over time.

Examples include the MN County Biological Survey, MN County Geologic Atlas program, MN Soil Survey, inventorying of restorable wetlands in MN, mapping and measurement of springsheds, identification and prioritization of critical lands, and plans for conservation and natural resource management.

*Land and Habitat Acquisition:* ~\$9 million to allow for a combination of fee-title and easement acquisition of ~2,000 acres of land and habitat to protect forests, wetlands, shoreline, prairie, and other habitat for both human and animal benefit.

*Land and Habitat Restoration:* ~\$2.2 million to allow for restoration activities—including soil preparation, native vegetation installation, structural improvements, and exotic and invasive species removal—to be performed on ~5,100 acres.

*Natural Resource Research and Analysis:* ~\$3.1 million to allow for efforts to advance our knowl-

edge and provide recommendations for addressing problems relating to ballast water, endocrine disruptors, invasive species, artificial drainage, energy production, climate change, and resource management.

*Environmental Education and Outreach:* ~\$2.5 million to allow for efforts to assist communities with local conservation efforts and develop and pilot programs for increasing residential energy efficiency statewide.

*Administration:* ~\$1.4 million for FY 2010-2011 LCCMR administration (\$1,254,000) and DNR project contract management (\$158,000).

*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.*

## 2008: Projects Funded (MN Laws 2008, Chapter 367, Section 2)

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. Examples include the MN Soil Survey, MN County Biological Survey, and MN County Geologic Atlas program.

*Natural Resource Research:* ~\$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 environmental education and outreach efforts to foster increased citizen involvement in 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 activi-

ties—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).



Sugar Hills Forest Legacy property near Grand Rapids, MN—LCCMR site visit, 06/13/07.

## 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.



Weaver Bottoms on Mississippi River near Weaver, MN—LCCMR site visit ,09/16/08.

## 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.

**MN Soil Survey** [ML 2005: completed; ML 2007, ML 2008: underway]: Ongoing, county-by-county analysis and mapping of the state's soils providing critical

data for protecting and managing Minnesota habitat, wetlands, and water resources.

**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.

*The LCCMR follows a mission of providing long-term secure support for activities whose benefits are realized only over an extended period of time.*

## 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.



View from Pondview Trail in Sibley State Park near New London, MN—LCCMR site visit, 07/10/07.



## 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

## Information Gathering: January 1, 2007—December 31, 2008

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.