



Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund (ENRTF)

M.L. 2020 ENRTF Work Plan (Main Document)

Today's Date: August 20, 2019

Date of Next Status Update Report: April 1, 2021

Date of Work Plan Approval:

Project Completion Date: June 30, 2022

Does this submission include an amendment request? ___

PROJECT TITLE: Making the Superior Hiking Trail A Showcase for Resource-Sensitive Hiking Trail Construction

Project Manager: Denny Caneff, Executive Director

Organization: Superior Hiking Trail Association

College, Department, or Division:

Mailing Address: 731 7th Avenue

City, State, Zip Code: Two Harbors, MN 55616

Project Manager Direct Telephone Number: 218-834-2700 x202

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Web Address: www.superiorhiking.org

Location: The route of the Superior Hiking Trail, northeastern MN, from MN-WI state line to Canadian border.

Total Project Budget: \$450,000

Amount Spent: \$0

Balance: \$450,000

Legal Citation: M.L. 2020, Chp. xx, Sec. xx, Subd. xx

Appropriation Language:

PROJECT STATEMENT:

Our main goal for this project is to renew and rebuild the Superior Hiking Trail (SHT) to minimize environmental damage, make the Trail safer for users, and make it more resistant to the impacts of increased traffic and climate change. Secondary goals are to meet or exceed expectations of landowners, both private and public, to responsibly manage the SHT on their lands, and enhance users' experience on the SHT.

Much of the SHT was built well before national trail building standards were established. The SHT is hugely popular and was not built to withstand the impact of an estimated 100,000 users annually. As a result, there is considerable environmental damage to the Trail, and damage caused by users of the Trail.

A 2018 ENRTF grant allowed the Superior Hiking Trail Association (SHTA) to hire trail experts to evaluate root causes of environmental damage and user dangers on the SHT. Their findings were at once sobering and inspiring: the problems on the SHT were not limited to the 30 miles that they evaluated but were in fact endemic along the entire 300-mile length of the Trail. Their advice to the Association: adopt national hiking trail construction standards; change organizational systems and processes to support sustainable trail building; and focus intensely on managing water. This advice dovetailed nicely with the SHTA's own Trail Renewal Program, launched in early 2018, a commitment to reduce natural resource damage caused by SHT users.

Outcomes: Sections of the Trail showing the most environmental damage (mud holes, eroding hillsides) will be repaired. Built structures (e.g. board walks, stairways, bridges) will be constructed to minimize environmental damage and reduce hazards for trail users. Wetlands through which the SHT passes will be far less impacted; erosion-prone slopes and stream banks will be better protected.

OVERALL PROJECT STATUS UPDATES:

First Update April 1, 2021

Second Update October 1, 2021

Third Update April 1, 2022

Final Report between project end (June 30) and August 15, 2022

III. PROJECT ACTIVITIES AND OUTCOMES:

ACTIVITY 1 Title: Renew and Rebuild the Most Damaged and Dangerous Segments

Description: There are countless board walks, stairways, small bridges and other structures – and, conversely, a lack of them – needing reconstruction and renewal. Our focus in this activity will be to replace weak or decrepit built structures, using construction standards for trail structures developed by federal resource agencies and used by most other national scenic trail groups. In addition, this activity will include retrofitting the SHT with water management devices (e.g. water bars, drainage dips, swales, ditches) so that water is deflected away from and off the tread (footpath) of the Trail, thereby reducing or eliminating erosion and mud holes.

ACTIVITY 1 ENRTF BUDGET: \$225,000

Outcome	Completion Date
1. Up to 40 structures will be rebuilt or built anew in areas most in need	June 2022

Outcome	Completion Date
Milestones: 12 structures in 2020; and 15 each in 2021 and 2022.	
2. <i>Up to 25 miles of the SHT will be retrofitted with water management devices</i> Milestones: 5 miles in 2020, and 10 miles each year in 2021 and 2022.	June 2022
3. <i>Up to 10 short reroutes totaling up to 2 miles will be completed</i> Milestones: .5 mile in 2020;1.5 miles in 2021; .5 mile in 2022.	June 2022

First Update April 1, 2021

Second Update October 1, 2021

Third Update April 1, 2022

Final Report between project end (June 30) and August 15, 2022

ACTIVITY 2 Title: Renewing the SHT By Making Brand-New Trail

Description: Some segments of the SHT were simply put in the wrong place from the beginning: at the bottom of a slope, through a wetland area, or onto a nearby snowmobile trail for lack of a better route. In this activity, we intend to build entirely new sections of trail (1,000 -10,000 feet), because the existing trail simply can't be fortified enough to withstand the natural and human forces undermining it. In these cases, starting over is the best course of action. There are many vagaries to getting a "reroute" approved, making it difficult to determine exactly which segments would get rerouted. Those listed below are high-priority candidates for rerouting.

Outcome	Completion Date
1. <i>Soggy segments of Britton-to-Oberg and Lutsen-to-Caribou Trail sections of SHT totaling up to 5 miles, will be rerouted to higher, firmer ground</i> Milestones: 1.5 miles in 2020; 3 miles in 2021; and .5 mile in 2022.	June 2022
2. <i>Those segments in the worst shape of the the SHT loop trail in Cascade River State Park will be upgraded and improved</i> Milestones: 0 segments in 2020; 4 segments in 2021; 0 segments in 2022.	June 2022
3. <i>A new route (about 1.5 miles) will be built to create a second Northern Terminus for the SHT, allowing users to arrive at the Pigeon River (Canadian border)</i> Milestones: New route flagged and mapped in 2020; approved in 2021; partially built in 2021; completed in 2022.	June 2022

First Update April 1, 2021

Second Update October 1, 2021

Third Update April 1, 2022

Final Report between project end (June 30) and August 15, 2022

IV. DISSEMINATION:

Description: Dissemination of progress on our project will be continuous and comprehensive. The area's community newspapers (Cook County News Herald, Duluth News Tribune, Lake County News Chronicle, WTIP radio) enjoy covering developments on the SHT, and they will keep tabs on each phase of this project. Our own media include Instagram, Facebook, a print newspaper and an e-newsletter. We will use all of these media to mark and publicize the project as it proceeds. (All these media can be found at www.superiorhiking.org or via the search function of these platforms).

The SHT is affiliated with the North Country Trail, a national scenic trail running 4,600 miles from Vermont to North Dakota. Its association has a quarterly publication that will track project developments too. In addition, the Parks and Trails Council of Minnesota is an enthusiastic supporter of the SHT and will no doubt highlight these developments (and the ENRTF as the funding source) in its publications.

The Minnesota Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund (ENRTF) will be acknowledged through use of the trust fund logo or attribution language on project print and electronic media, publications, signage, and other communications per the [ENRTF Acknowledgement Guidelines](#).

First Update April 1, 2021

Second Update October 1, 2021

Third Update April 1, 2022

Final Report between project end (June 30) and August 15, 2022

V. ADDITIONAL BUDGET INFORMATION:

A. Personnel and Capital Expenditures

Explanation of Capital Expenditures Greater Than \$5,000:

Purchase of a used snowmobile (\$8,000 budgeted) is part of this work plan. The SHTA will use a snowmobile to haul lumber and other materials to remote locations of the SHT that are proximate to the Trail. Our stiffest challenge working with volunteers is to ask them to haul heavy lumber to a work site, then ask them to help build a structure in the back country. The snowmobile would eliminate a lot of heavy hauling by human beings.

We fully intend to make use of this snowmobile for years to come and it should outlast the duration of this project, and be used solely and strictly for the intended purpose of assisting trail construction.

Explanation of Use of Classified Staff:

Total Number of Full-time Equivalents (FTE) Directly Funded with this ENRTF Appropriation:

Enter Total Estimated Personnel Hours for entire duration of project: N/A	Divide total personnel hours by 2,080 hours in 1 yr = TOTAL FTE: N/A
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Total Number of Full-time Equivalents (FTE) Estimated to Be Funded through Contracts with this ENRTF Appropriation: Note: personnel paid by ENRTF grant funds is a Superior Hiking Trail Association employee, not a contractor.

Enter Total Estimated Contract Personnel Hours for entire duration of project: 1040 hours	Divide total contract hours by 2,080 hours in 1 yr = TOTAL FTE: 20%
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VI. PROJECT PARTNERS:

A. Partners outside of project manager’s organization receiving ENRTF funding: NONE

B. Partners outside of project manager’s organization NOT receiving ENRTF funding:

- Minnesota DNR (state parks and forestry) – land access, technical assistance, environmental permitting.
- U.S. Forest Service (Superior National Forest) – land access, technical assistance, materials contributions, environmental permitting.
- St. Louis County, Lake County (forestry, highways, land) – land access, technical assistance, permitting.
- City of Duluth (parks dept.) – land access, financial assistance, technical assistance.
- North Country Trail Association – advice and counsel, technical assistance.
- Ice Age Trail Alliance – advice and counsel, technical assistance.

VII. LONG-TERM- IMPLEMENTATION AND FUNDING:

The Trail Renewal Program has focused the Association’s energy, resources and systems so that the lofty goal of creating and supporting a hiking trail that lasts a century is achievable. The Trail Renewal Program has brought about a significant increase in private donations that will support the operations of the organization. Big trail-building projects will require support from wherever we can get it, including public sources (local governments, Iron Range Resources and Rehabilitation Board (IRRRB), ENRTF, Parks Greater MN Parks and Trails Commission) and private sources (private foundations, major donors and investors).

VIII. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS:

- Project status update reports will be submitted April 1 and October 1 each year of the project
- A final report and associated products will be submitted between June 30 and August 15, 2022

IX. SEE ADDITIONAL WORK PLAN COMPONENTS:

A. Budget Spreadsheet

B. Visual Component or Map

C. Parcel List Spreadsheet N/A

D. Acquisition, Easements, and Restoration Requirements N/A

E. Research Addendum N/A

Attachment B

Below: The red and yellow dots represent "undesirable trail conditions." From a 2018 assessment funded by ENRTF grant.



Superior Hiking Trail Association ENRTF Application April 2019

Examples of worn-out trail and failed built structures that must be replaced for user safety and erosion concerns.

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



Legal Citation:

Project Manager: Denny Caneff, executive director

Project Title: Making the Superior Hiking Trail A Showcase for Resource-Sensitive Hiking Trail Construction

Organization: Superior Hiking Trail Association

Project Budget: \$450,000

Project Length and Completion Date: July 1, 2020 to June 30, 2022

Today's Date: August 21, 2019

ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES TRUST FUND BUDGET		Budget	Amount Spent	Balance
BUDGET ITEM				
Personnel (Wages and Benefits)		\$ 32,500	\$ -	
Trail operations director oversees trail construction work. Wages: 20% (.2 FTE) of \$52,000 annual salary x 2.5 years = \$26,000. Benefits; 25% of salary supported by grant (or \$26K)x 2.5 years = \$6,500.				
Professional/Technical/Service Contracts				
Trail construction contractors will be experts in recreational trail building. They will be sourced via competitive RFP process. Services would include trail construction, board walk and stairway construction (wood or stone), but could include trail route identification and mapping.		\$ 381,000	\$ -	
Equipment/Tools/Supplies				
This includes lumber, cement, hardware, gravel, metal bog pans and related hardware, and shipping and transport of those materials.		\$ 27,300	\$ -	
Capital Expenditures Over \$5,000				
Used snowmobile to transport materials to remote locations on frozen ground.		\$ 8,000	\$ -	
Fee Title Acquisition				
		\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Easement Acquisition				
		\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Professional Services for Acquisition				
		\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Printing				
		\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Travel expenses in Minnesota				
Per Commissioner's Plan, travel to work sites by SHTA staff = \$1,200.		\$ 1,200	\$ -	
Other				
		\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
COLUMN TOTAL		\$ 450,000	\$ -	\$ -
SOURCE AND USE OF OTHER FUNDS CONTRIBUTED TO THE PROJECT				
	Status (secured or pending)	Budget	Spent	Balance
Non-State: Donations and memberships	Secured	\$ 200,000	\$ -	\$ 200,000
State: Recreational Trails Program, IRRRB	Pending	\$ 150,000	\$ -	\$ 150,000
In kind: Volunteers (4,000 hours x \$20/hr.)	Secured	\$ 80,000	\$ -	\$ 80,000
Other ENRTF APPROPRIATIONS AWARDED IN THE LAST SIX YEARS				
	Amount legally obligated but not yet spent	Budget	Spent	Balance
M.L. 2018, Chp. 214, Art. 4, Sec. 02, Subd. 09f		\$ 291,000	\$ 61,273	\$ 229,727

