

Natural Resources

Projects Summary

(\$ in thousands)

Project Title	Priority Ranking	Funding Source	Project Requests for State Funds		
			2024	2026	2028
Natural Resources Asset Preservation	1	GO	\$ 205,000	\$ 205,000	\$ 205,000
Natural Resources Betterment of Buildings	2	GO	\$ 87,000	\$ 87,000	\$ 87,000
Natural Resources Acquisition and Betterment of Public Lands	3	GO	\$ 35,000	\$ 35,000	\$ 35,000
Wildfire Aviation Infrastructure	4	GO	\$ 6,000	\$ 0	\$ 0
Improving Accessibility to State Parks, Recreation Areas, Wildlife Management Areas and Aquatic Management Areas	5	GO	\$ 25,000	\$ 25,000	\$ 25,000
Dam Safety Repair, Reconstruction or Removal	6	GO	\$ 10,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 10,000
Flood Hazard Mitigation Grant Assistance Program	7	GO	\$ 25,000	\$ 25,000	\$ 25,000
Parks and Trails Local and Regional Grant Program	8	GO	\$ 4,000	\$ 4,000	\$ 4,000
Total Project Requests			\$ 397,000	\$ 391,000	\$ 391,000
General Obligation Bonds (GO) Total			\$ 397,000	\$ 391,000	\$ 391,000

Natural Resources Asset Preservation

AT A GLANCE

2024 Request Amount:	\$205,000
Priority Ranking:	1
Project Summary:	\$205 million for the repair and renovation of capital assets (including buildings, roads, trails, public water accesses, bridges, recreational facilities and more) to ensure they are safe and functional for the recreating public, modernize Minnesota’s outdoor recreation experiences, support the conservation of Minnesota’s natural resources, and preserve the state’s investment in its capital assets.

Project Description

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) requests \$205 million for Natural Resources Asset Preservation (NRAP) needs under M.S. 84.946. The DNR manages a broad array of building and recreational assets that serve and benefit people across Minnesota. This includes 2,924 buildings at more than 225 locations, 75 state parks and recreation areas, nine waysides, 43 forest campgrounds, 4,655 miles of roads, 2,605 miles of paved trails, 514 bridges and several thousand culverts, 1,689 public water access sites, 1,554 water control structures, 311 dams, 15 fish hatcheries, one tree nursery, and thousands of miles of hiking trails. All of these require periodic repair and renewal.

This request addresses the following high-priority needs:

- **Buildings:** \$50 million for repair and deferred maintenance of existing buildings, particularly to bring crisis or poor buildings and building components up to acceptable or better condition. The DNR’s 10-Year Capital Asset Need Report shows that of 2,924 buildings, 192 are in crisis condition and 483 are in poor condition. Special focus will be paid to safety and accessibility for visitors and staff, and operational efficiency.
- **Water and Wastewater Systems:** \$14.4 million to address aging and failing water and wastewater infrastructure statewide, including at our most heavily used state parks such as Itasca, Lake Bemidji, and Fort Snelling state parks. Projects will focus on water and wastewater systems that do not meet current health and environmental standards.
- **Roads, Trails, and Bridges:** \$57.8 million to provide critical repair and renewal of roads, trails, culverts and bridges in the worst condition on public land. This includes replacement of the vehicle entrance bridge at Tettegouche State Park, a nearly 100-year-old, fracture-critical bridge that is beyond the end of its service life and has required temporary closures and ongoing weight restrictions due to safety hazards. DNR-managed roads provide Minnesotans access to state forests, parks, recreation areas, and wildlife management areas, and the recreational and economic activities these lands support. These roads also provide access to private land and serve as part of a system of roads that include federal, county, and township-managed roads. Priority trail repair projects include the Glacial Lakes, Paul Bunyan, Luce Line, Shooting Star and Willard

Munger state trails. Repairs will include trail surfacing and updated culverts and bridges. State Trails provide low cost access to outdoor recreation and have approximately 2 million visitors annually.

- **Public Water Access Sites (PWAs) and Lake Superior Small Craft Harbors:** \$12 million to rehabilitate Minnesota’s public water accesses and harbors to make them accessible to all users, meet the changing needs of modern vessels (both motorized and paddle sports), retrofit accesses for improved protection of public waters from stormwater runoff and invasive species, and enhance resilience from more frequent climate-related storm events.
- **Water Control Structures:** \$7 million to repair or replace deteriorating water control structures that provide waterfowl habitat and support fisheries on key shallow lakes and wetlands across Minnesota.
- **Monitoring Wells:** \$2.5 million for rehabilitation of existing groundwater monitoring (observation) wells. Monitoring wells are placed in various aquifers across the state to measure groundwater levels and provide long-term groundwater level data. The resulting data are used for water supply planning by communities, industry, and agriculture. Maintenance of these wells is critical to meeting these needs.
- **Campsites, Group Camps, Shower Buildings, Day Use Areas and Vault Toilets:** \$46.4 million to address extensive deferred maintenance and meet the changing needs of the public by refurbishing campgrounds and group camps, providing amenities desired by today’s visitors (e.g., accessible vault toilets, modern shower buildings, electric hookups, water lines and drinking fountains, picnic tables, fire rings, and broadband/Wi-Fi connectivity), providing more separation between user groups, and providing a better balance in the variety of experiences provided in our state parks, recreation areas and forest campgrounds, thereby connecting more people to the outdoors.
- **Hatcheries:** \$14.8 million for critical repairs to fish hatchery facilities that support conservation, outdoor recreation, tourism and rural economies.

The above investments include resources to continue the Get Out MORE initiative to Modernize Outdoor Recreation Experiences in Minnesota.

Project Rationale

The DNR manages built assets valued at \$3.5 billion for the benefit of all Minnesotans. This infrastructure, which spans every Minnesota county and reflects generations of investment, connects Minnesotans with the outdoors, supports community prosperity, conserves our natural heritage, and contributes to our quality of life. Stewardship of these assets requires ongoing repair, renovation, and replacement.

NRAP funding is complemented by “Betterment of Buildings” funding that is a separate component of DNR’s overall bonding request. NRAP funding addresses the backlog of deferred maintenance that affects the safety and usability of DNR-managed facilities. “Betterment” funding allows for substantial improvements or additions to, or replacement of, buildings that are unsafe, fail to meet current needs, or have reached the end of their useful life. These programs together are critical to address the substantial deferred maintenance and renewal/replacement needs for DNR-managed facilities and infrastructure.

The growing list of deferred maintenance (currently estimated to total \$778 million) poses considerable risk to the safety and usability of DNR-managed assets, and the public benefits they provide. Significant investment in asset preservation is essential to ensure these resources continue to serve all Minnesotans safely and effectively into the future. Further, investment in modernization will both meet the needs of today's outdoor recreationists and sustain outdoor recreation now and into the future.

Project Timeline

The project will be completed within the given time frame.

Other Considerations

The DNR's asset preservation needs are further documented in the most recent DNR 10-Year Capital Asset Need report (mndnr.gov/reports).

Investing in Natural Resources Asset Preservation also advances the DNR's Get Out MORE initiative. This effort received significant funding in the 2023 Legislative Session, but further investment is needed to fully realize the vision of ensuring Minnesotans of all abilities and interests enjoy a world-class recreation system, whatever outdoor adventure they choose.

Impact on Agency Operating Budgets

Asset preservation addresses deferred maintenance, reduces utility and staff costs, and provides other operational efficiencies which will reduce the impact on future operating budgets.

Description of Previous Appropriations

L2023, Ch. 72 - Bond, Asset Preservation \$36,000,000

L2020 (5th SS), Ch. 3 - Bond, Asset Preservation \$20,000,000

L2019 Ch. 2 - Bond, Asset Preservation, \$3,419,000

L2018 Ch. 214 - Bond, Asset Preservation, \$26,581,000

L2017 (1st SS), Ch. 8 - Bond, Asset Preservation, \$15,000,000

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Natural Resources Betterment of Buildings

AT A GLANCE

2024 Request Amount:	\$87,000
Priority Ranking:	2
Project Summary:	\$87 million for reconstruction or replacement of offices and facilities that are unsafe, fail to meet current needs, or have reached the end of their useful life, in order to create a healthy and safe workplace and better serve all Minnesotans.

Project Description

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) requests \$87 million to acquire, construct, and improve buildings under M.S. 86A.12. The request will allow significant improvements to, or replacement of, DNR-managed buildings across Minnesota including:

- adding needed capacity to store mineral exploration samples at the **Hibbing Drill Core Library** and enhancing the mineral core examination facilities;
- when needed, replacing DNR offices and storage facilities to improve accessibility, staff safety, and operational effectiveness. DNR is assessing ongoing buildings needs and carefully considering opportunities for consolidation and divestment in addition to identifying replacement needs;
- design and construction of the final phase of modernization at the **Badoura State Forest Nursery** to 1) alleviate the state's dependence on a single, out-of-state commercial grower for containerized (i.e., "plug") seedlings; 2) lengthen the spring planting window by growing containerized seedlings that can be harvested and planted during times when bare-root seedlings cannot; 3) enhance the survival rate of reforestation efforts in years with low rainfall; and 4) help meet the increased demand for seedlings for reforestation and climate mitigation efforts; and
- further advance the **Get Out MORE (Modernize Outdoor Recreation Experiences) initiative** by replacing and constructing new visitor centers, picnic shelters, trail center facilities, camper cabins, and campground shower buildings at state parks and recreation areas.

These funds will also support the highest-priority replacements of inadequate or unsafe office and storage spaces statewide and the most critical renovations to historic buildings that DNR manages.

Project Rationale

The DNR manages built assets valued at \$3.5 billion for the benefit of all Minnesotans. This infrastructure, which spans every Minnesota county and reflects generations of investment, connects Minnesotans with the outdoors, supports community prosperity, conserves our natural heritage, and contributes to our quality of life. Stewardship of these assets requires ongoing repair, renovation, and replacement.

Funding for Betterment of Buildings is a critical complement to funding for Natural Resources Asset

Preservation (NRAP). NRAP funding addresses the backlog of deferred maintenance that affects the safety and usability of DNR-managed facilities. “Betterment” funding allows for substantial improvements or additions to, or replacement of, buildings that are unsafe, fail to meet current needs, or have reached the end of their useful life.

These programs together are critical to address the substantial deferred maintenance and renewal/replacement needs for DNR-managed facilities and infrastructure.

The growing list of renewal and replacement needs poses considerable risk to the public benefits provided by DNR-managed assets. New buildings are also needed to improve operations, increase access to outdoor recreation and store critical equipment that provides services to the public and protects natural resources. This requires significant investment to ensure these resources continue to serve all Minnesotans safely and effectively into the future and meet the evolving needs of Minnesotans and our natural resources.

Renewal and replacement of DNR-managed buildings also reduces operating costs and enhances public value by replacing antiquated buildings with ones that require less energy and water to operate, have greater safety features, provide better access to all Minnesotans, and require significantly less maintenance now and into the future.

Project Timeline

The project will be completed within the given time frame.

Other Considerations

Renewal and replacement enhances the energy efficiency and sustainability of DNR facilities, which lowers operating costs for specific facilities.

When determining building needs, the DNR looks for opportunities to consolidate uses to promote efficient use of space and reduce long-term operating costs (example: co-located offices or storage).

Impact on Agency Operating Budgets

Renewal and replacement of DNR buildings will address deferred maintenance, reduce utility and staff costs, and provide other operational efficiencies which will reduce the impact on future operating budgets. New buildings will increase operating costs and future maintenance needs but also provide operational efficiencies and reduce wear on essential equipment.

Description of Previous Appropriations

L2023, Ch. 72 - Bond, Buildings, \$30,000,000

L2018, Ch. 214 - Bond, Buildings, \$6,000,000

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Natural Resources Acquisition and Betterment of Public Lands

AT A GLANCE

2024 Request Amount:	\$35,000
Priority Ranking:	3
Project Summary:	\$35 million to acquire and better public lands in order to conserve Minnesota's natural resources, enrich outdoor recreational opportunities, and provide for sustainable commercial uses of natural resources.

Project Description

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) requests \$35 million to acquire and improve DNR-managed public lands under M.S. 86A.12.

Acquisition: \$9 million is requested to acquire (either in fee or through easements):

- High-priority parcels for Scientific and Natural Areas (SNAs), focusing on strategic in-holdings and adjacent parcels to existing SNAs, parcels already in public ownership, and those that may provide match for RIM funding.
- Strategic in-holdings for state parks and recreation areas, and high-priority parcels for state trails, and public water accesses.
- Forested parcels currently in private ownership that might otherwise be converted to non-forest uses.

Betterment of Public Lands: \$26 million is requested to improve public lands, including:

- Reforestation after timber harvests, forest pest outbreaks, and storms/wildfires.
- Forest stand improvement projects to enhance species diversity, resilience, wildlife habitat, water quality benefits, and economic value.
- Improvements (e.g., safety, adding parking, and accessibility features) at SNAs.
- Renewal and replacement of campgrounds, recreation areas, and day-use areas and development of new campground loops to meet the needs of current and future users. This includes adding new tenting and group campsites, adding amenities such as larger campsites and increased capacity for RV camping at existing campgrounds, developing new RV dump stations, building trailheads, and constructing a campground with off-highway vehicle access in the Beltrami Island State Forest.

Project Rationale

Minnesota’s public lands are vital to the health and wellbeing of the state. They provide opportunities for those of all incomes and abilities to connect with and enjoy the benefits of the outdoors, and they contribute to the health of local economies. Continued investment is needed both to maintain the

rich outdoor resources Minnesotans currently enjoy and to ensure the state’s public lands meet the needs of a growing and changing population. Investment is also needed to help ensure Minnesota’s natural systems are resilient to the effects of climate change and other large-scale landscape impacts.

Project Timeline

The project will be completed within the given time frame.

Other Considerations

DNR evaluates acquisitions using department-wide Strategic Land Asset Management (SLAM) goals, as well as division- and program-specific goals for Forestry, Parks and Trails, Fish and Wildlife and Ecological and Water Resources. DNR’s department-wide land acquisition goals are to:

- Increase close-to-home outdoor recreation opportunities
- Protect significant and/or rare natural resources
- Restore and protect water resources
- Mitigate and adapt to climate change
- Expand access to existing land holdings
- Consolidate land ownership, creating larger, contiguous blocks of DNR lands

Impact on Agency Operating Budgets

Land acquisitions can impact operating budgets. Acquiring in-holdings may increase operating efficiency by consolidating ownership and reducing boundary and trespass issues. Some acquisitions may result in development of new facilities in the future which could increase operating costs. Campground expansions may increase operating costs, but may also increase resource utilization. This bonding request funds a majority of the Reforestation Program budget and will reduce our operating budget request in FY26 and FY27.

Description of Previous Appropriations

- L2023, Ch. 72 – General Fund, Acquisition and Betterment of Public Lands, \$2,500,000
- L2023, Ch. 72 - Bond, Reforestation, \$6,000,000
- L2020 (5th SS), Ch. 3 - Bond, Forests for the Future (i.e., easement acquisitions), \$1,000,000 L2018, Ch. 214 - Bond, Reforestation, \$3,000,000
- L2017 (1st SS), Ch. 8 - Bond, Reforestation, \$1,000,000 L2017 (1st SS), Ch. 8 - Bond, Parks and Trails, \$14,548,000
- L2017 (1st SS), Ch. 8 - Bond, St. Paul Invasive Tree Pests, \$1,500,000

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Wildfire Aviation Infrastructure

AT A GLANCE

2024 Request Amount:	\$6,000
Priority Ranking:	4
Project Summary:	\$6 million to modernize wildfire aviation infrastructure in Brainerd that supports effective response to wildfires and other safety needs.

Project Description

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) responds to wildfires and other safety and emergency resource management needs such as flooding, wind damage, and ice and snow damage to state administered lands, which requires safe, secure, and efficient facilities to house air operations. This request will allow the DNR to replace two aging and inadequate mobile home units that currently serve as the wildfire and emergency response facility at the Brainerd airport. The new operations center will provide space for briefing, dispatch, crew readiness, airtanker loading, storage, and pilot rest areas. The project will also replace several sheds that house aircraft loading equipment. The primary duty of the Brainerd wildfire aviation base is safe and efficient response to wildland fire.

Project Rationale

Airtanker base, hangar, and helibase facilities must be secure, safe, energy efficient, and provide the space needed for operations personnel and aircraft pilots and crews to allow the DNR to effectively respond to wildfires and other emergency response and public safety needs on state lands, as requested.

To meet these goals, the Brainerd wildfire aviation base facilities will:

1. Be strategically located to support wildfire and emergency response needs in central Minnesota;
2. Be the primary airtanker base for large operations in central Minnesota;
3. Support integrated operations as much as possible to increase efficiency and inter-operability; and,
4. Provide for storage and protection of equipment to increase lifecycle and avoid unscheduled repairs.

Project Timeline

The project will be completed within the given time frame.

Other Considerations

The DNR is working with the Brainerd Lakes Regional Airport Commission on this project and may grant the commission funds to execute construction.

Modernization of the Brainerd facility will complete the DNR’s near-term upgrades to wildfire aviation

bases. These strategically placed aviation bases provide rapid and safe response to wildfire prone areas of the state. The bases are also available for other public safety emergency response needs. Long-term maintenance needs such as the replacement of the ramp in Bemidji and Brainerd should be anticipated in approximately 2033 due to pavement deterioration over time.

Impact on Agency Operating Budgets

This project is expected to reduce operating expenses by improving building weatherization and lowering maintenance costs on interior and exterior finishes.

Description of Previous Appropriations

L2023, Ch. 72 - Bond, Wildfire Aviation Infrastructure, \$6,360,000

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(\$ in thousands)

Improving Accessibility to State Parks, Recreation Areas, Wildlife Management Areas and Aquatic Management Areas

AT A GLANCE

2024 Request Amount: \$25,000

Priority Ranking: 5

Project Summary: \$25 million to improve accessibility at state parks, wildlife management areas and aquatic management areas. Project components include renovations of existing facilities and development of new accessible amenities to serve visitors with a variety of physical abilities.

Project Description

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) requests \$25 million to comprehensively improve the accessibility of state-managed lands and facilities to Minnesotans of all abilities, thereby advancing the strategic priorities of connecting people to the outdoors and expanding diversity, equity and inclusion. The funding will enable the DNR to complete accessibility improvements to high-use facilities at various state parks and recreation areas, as well as high-visitation wildlife management areas (WMAs) and aquatic management areas (AMAs).

State park and recreation area renovation efforts will improve accessibility of bathrooms, parking areas, showers, campsites, trails and a variety of day-use and interpretive facilities, as well as provide new amenities to meet the needs of an increasingly diverse user base with a variety of physical abilities and skills. As an example, DNR recently updated the St. Croix State Park Visitor Center to include large tactile displays and audio exhibits for visually impaired and hearing impaired visitors. The project team also worked with the Mille Lacs Band to develop culturally accurate content.

The DNR will also identify site-specific opportunities and complete the WMA and AMA accessibility improvements identified to have the greatest benefit. Projects are expected to include improved accessibility of parking lots, trails, and hunting blinds.

Project Rationale

Many DNR buildings and facilities are more than 50 years old and were built before the advent of state and federal accessibility standards. Recent renovations and construction projects meet these standards. However, such projects are currently only implemented as buildings and facilities need major repairs. As a result, most DNR-managed buildings and facilities remain only partially accessible.

The DNR has been partnering with the Minnesota Council on Disability and interested stakeholders to identify opportunities to enhance accessibility at public lands and facilities. The Natural Resources Asset Preservation (NRAP) funding request includes resources to rehabilitate Minnesota’s public water accesses to make them accessible to all users. Significant investment is also needed to create more comprehensive accessibility on other public lands.

This project will build on demonstrations of what more comprehensive accessibility looks like, such as the fully accessible visitor center exhibit that was recently completed at St. Croix State Park and the accessibility improvements underway at William O'Brien State Park. It also will provide for more accessible experiences across the state so that all Minnesotans can enjoy public lands and facilities in their entirety.

Project Timeline

The project will be completed within the given time frame.

Other Considerations

Enhanced accessibility opens outdoor experiences to people with disabilities and improves access and experience for people of all abilities.

Impact on Agency Operating Budgets

Comprehensive accessibility improvements may address deferred maintenance and provide other operational efficiencies which will reduce the impact on future operating budgets.

Description of Previous Appropriations

L2023, Ch. 72 – Bond, \$1,200,000

L2020, (5th SS), Ch. 3 - Bond \$3,000,000

L2018, Ch. 214, Bond, \$500,000

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Dam Safety Repair, Reconstruction or Removal

AT A GLANCE

2024 Request Amount:	\$10,000
Priority Ranking:	6
Project Summary:	\$10 million to maintain the structural integrity of dams, prevent public safety hazards, and regulate water levels on rivers and lakes.

Project Description

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) requests \$10 million for dam safety projects. This request supports the DNR’s Dam Safety Program, which was established under M.S. 103G.511 to manage Minnesota’s public dam infrastructure. The program provides design, engineering, and construction assistance to repair, reconstruct, or remove dams, and to respond to dam safety emergencies. This request will support the top 18 projects on the Dam Safety project priority list:

- Modification of two low-head river dams to address an obsolete design that presents an inherent safety hazard.
- Critical repairs to or removal of approximately 11 additional dams managed by the DNR.
- Grants to local units of government to address safety needs at up to five locally-owned dams.

About 10 percent of the request will be reserved for emergencies. Unspent emergency funds will be used on high-priority projects identified on the Dam Safety project priority list.

Project Rationale

Dams are used to regulate water levels on many of Minnesota’s recreational lakes, providing significant outdoor recreation, tourism, economic, and community benefits. For example, Mille Lacs, Minnetonka, Bronson, and Ottertail lakes all depend on dams to regulate water levels.

There are more than 1,150 dams in Minnesota; 650 are public dams, and the state owns more than 300 of these. Most of the publicly owned dams in Minnesota are more than 50 years old and require ongoing repairs to maintain their structural integrity, prevent public safety hazards, and to regulate water levels on recreational lakes. Emergency repairs must be made when risk of an imminent dam failure threatens public safety.

Management of the state’s public dam infrastructure via the Dam Safety Program also includes modification of hazardous or obsolete dams, and removal of those that no longer provide significant public benefits or where rehabilitation would not be cost-effective or environmentally protective. These projects may also provide natural resource benefits by maximizing the biological diversity of river systems and restoring and reconnecting upstream and downstream habitats.

Project Timeline

The project will be completed within the given time frame.

Other Considerations

As a part of the Dam Safety Program, every other year the DNR develops and submits to the legislature a dam safety project priority list. This list, along with the maintenance needs identified in the DNR's 10-Year Capital Asset Need Report, informs each capital request for dam safety repair, reconstruction and removal.

Impact on Agency Operating Budgets

Completion of dam safety projects may reduce operating costs including maintenance and staff time.

Description of Previous Appropriations

L2023, Ch. 72 – Bond, \$4,000,000

L2020 (5th SS), Ch. 3 - Bond, \$20,000,000

L2017 (1st SS), Ch. 8 - Bond, \$9,400,000

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Flood Hazard Mitigation Grant Assistance Program

AT A GLANCE

2024 Request Amount:	\$25,000
Priority Ranking:	7
Project Summary:	\$25 million for cost-share grants to local governments, including cities, counties, and watershed districts, for projects that reduce flood risk. Projects range from purchasing and removing damaged and at-risk residential structures from the floodplain to constructing levees, pumping stations, and multi-purpose flood impoundments.

Project Description

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) requests \$25 million for Flood Hazard Mitigation Grant Assistance Program grants. These funds provide cost-share grants to local governments to support projects that reduce flood risk in cities and watershed districts in the Red River Valley, Minnesota River Valley and other flood-risk areas across the state. Types of projects include the purchase and removal of flood-damaged and at-risk residential structures and construction of levees, pumping stations, and multi-purpose flood impoundments.

This funding supports the Flood Hazard Mitigation Grant Assistance Program established by M.S. 103F.161.

Project Rationale

Flood mitigation is cost effective. A 2017 study by the National Institute of Building Sciences shows that every \$1 spent on flood mitigation avoids \$7 in future damages. Minnesota’s previous investments in flood mitigation have resulted in a more flood-resilient state, and significantly decreased emergency flood response and recovery costs. Even with the significant progress that has been made, flood risks remain. Climate change and the resulting increased intensity of storm events has increased the need for robust program funding to enhance the resilience of Minnesota communities to future flooding events.

Project Timeline

The projects will be completed within the given time frame.

Other Considerations

Past appropriations for the Flood Hazard Mitigation Grant Assistance Program have leveraged significant federal and local dollars, considerably reducing Minnesota's vulnerability to both the safety and economic impacts of floods.

This program is complemented, but not replaced by, the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency’s community resiliency grants.

Impact on Agency Operating Budgets

The Flood Hazard Mitigation Grant Assistance Program has been funded by capital investment for many years and is not expected to result in new impacts on operating budgets.

Description of Previous Appropriations

L2023, Ch. 72 – Bond, \$34,300,000
L2023, Ch. 72 – General Fund, \$24,115,000
L2020, (5th SS), Ch. 3 - Bond, \$17,000,000
L2018, Ch. 214 - Bond, \$20,000,000
L2017, SS1, Ch. 8 - Bond, \$11,555,000
L2015, SS1, Ch. 5 - Bond, \$23,549,000
L2015, SS1, Ch. 5 - Bond, \$2,515,000 (Disaster)
L2015, SS1, Ch. 5 - General Fund, \$500,000 (Disaster)

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Parks and Trails Local and Regional Grant Program

AT A GLANCE

2024 Request Amount:	\$4,000
Priority Ranking:	8
Project Summary:	\$4 million to provide competitive grants to local governments for acquisition and development of local parks and trails across the state.

Project Description

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) requests \$4 million to provide competitive grants to local governments for acquisition and development of regional or local parks and trails across the state. These funds will support existing park and trail grant programs established in M.S. 85.019:

- Outdoor Recreation Grant Program: \$2 million to help local governments acquire, develop and/or redevelop close-to-home outdoor recreation facilities.
- Natural and Scenic Area Grant Program: \$1 million to help local governments and school districts acquire and protect natural and scenic areas statewide. Lands in their natural condition are becoming less available or reduced in size due to development and privatization, especially in areas of high population growth, shoreland, bluff tops, and areas where land use changes may restrict natural and scenic recreation opportunities to the public.
- Local Trail Connections Grant Program: \$500,000 to provide grants to local units of government to develop and acquire trail connections to residential areas, schools, workplaces, community centers, recreation areas, trails and parks.
- Regional Trail Grant Program: \$500,000 to provide grants to local units of government for development and acquisition of regional trails outside of the metropolitan area.

Project Rationale

This project supports Minnesota’s communities by helping to ensure public access to a high-quality system of local and regional parks and trails. Connecting people to the outdoors is a DNR strategic priority that is critical to enhancing community health and wellness. The COVID-19 pandemic has emphasized the importance of parks and trails to Minnesotans. Pass-through funding for local and regional parks and trails projects further fosters connections of children and families to the outdoors.

Project Timeline

The project will be completed within the given time frame.

Other Considerations

While Legacy funds have provided additional park and trail building acquisition and development funding to areas of regional significance, these funding sources cannot be used for local parks and trails. Local programs have received Lottery-in-Lieu, Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund, and General Fund appropriations in recent years, but the demand for funding is significantly greater than available funds.

Impact on Agency Operating Budgets

There will be minimal impact on the operating budget; impacts are related to managing the grant process.

Description of Previous Appropriations

L2023, Ch. 72 – Bond, \$2,000,000

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