

2018 Project Abstract

For the Period Ending June 30, 2020

PROJECT TITLE: Harmony State Trail Extension Land Acquisition

PROJECT MANAGER: Chris Giesen

AFFILIATION: City of Harmony

MAILING ADDRESS: 225 3rd Ave SW PO Box 488

CITY/STATE/ZIP: Harmony, MN 55939

PHONE: 507-886-8122

E-MAIL: chris.giesen@cedausa.com

WEBSITE: www.harmony.mn.us

FUNDING SOURCE: Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund

LEGAL CITATION: M.L. 2018, Chp. 214, Art. 4, Sec. 02, Subd. 09c

APPROPRIATION AMOUNT: \$ 235,000

AMOUNT SPENT: \$196,365.87

AMOUNT REMAINING: \$38,634.13

Sound bite of Project Outcomes and Results

This project provided funding to purchase fee title interest in 20 parcels to create a corridor for the extension of the Harmony-Preston state trail from the City of Harmony to the Iowa border, with a spur to Niagara Cave.

Overall Project Outcome and Results

Originally conceived as a part of the Governor's Design Team project in 1989, the extension south to the Iowa border and Niagara Cave was the next segment to be constructed of the Harmony-Preston Valley State Trail. Since the completion of the existing segment in the mid 90s, local volunteers worked with landowners to extend the trail south from Harmony to the major tourist attraction, Niagara Cave, and the Iowa border where the trail system from northeast Iowa will connect to create an interstate trail system.

Local volunteers secured option contracts on 16 parcels to secure the land corridor necessary for the approximately 6-mile trail. The options were set to expire on December 31, 2019. LCCMR funding was secured in 2018 to provide a funding source to exercise the options and purchase fee title what ended up being portions of 20 parcels. This acquired land will be donated to the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources per the authorizing legislation.

This funding provided in this project will allow for the construction of the state trail extension, which is to be completed in 2021. Once completed, this project will provide a recreational opportunity to regional residents and visitors from both in and outside of Minnesota; promoting outdoor recreation, health, and enjoyment of southeastern Minnesota natural resources.

Project Results Use and Dissemination

No materials were created to promote or disseminate information about this project as it was purely related to land acquisition. This project was mentioned in local media reports including newspapers and television news. All reports mentioned that funding was made possible through a grant from LCCMR and the Harmony Area Community Foundation. "Funding provided by" signage utilizing the trust fund logo will be placed on the bike trail route.



Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund (ENRTF)

M.L. 2018 ENRTF Work Plan Final Report (Main Document)

Today's Date: 07/09/2020

Final Report

Date of Work Plan Approval: 06/05/2018

Project Completion Date: June 30, 2020

PROJECT TITLE: Harmony State Trail Extension Land Acquisition

Project Manager: Chris Giesen

Organization: City of Harmony

College/Department/Division:

Mailing Address: 225 3rd Ave SW PO Box 488

City/State/Zip Code: Harmony, MN 55939

Telephone Number: (507) 886-8122

Email Address: chris.giesen@cedausa.com

Web Address: www.harmony.mn.us

Location: The City of Harmony and Harmony Township, Fillmore County, Southeast Minnesota.

Total Project Budget: \$235,000

Amount Spent: \$196,365.87

Balance: \$38,634.13

Legal Citation: M.L. 2018, Chp. 214, Art. 4, Sec. 02, Subd. 09c

Appropriation Language: \$235,000 the second year is from the trust fund to the commissioner of natural resources for an agreement with the city of Harmony to acquire fee title of about 16 parcels to allow for the approximate six-mile extension of the legislatively authorized state trail from Harmony south to the Iowa state border with a spur to Niagara Cave. The land must be transferred to the state after it has been purchased.

I. PROJECT STATEMENT: To provide funds to the City of Harmony so that they can purchase the fee title interest in the entire land corridor needed to develop an extension of its state trail (Harmony is calling this extension the “Harmony Stateline” State Trail), which is a legislatively authorized state trail that will extend the Harmony- Preston State Trail south from Harmony to the Iowa/Minnesota border, with a spur to Niagara Cave. This 6 mile trail is the first step in a proposed SE Minnesota- NE Iowa interstate trail system which will connect the Root River Trail system with the NE Iowa Trail system.

II. OVERALL PROJECT STATUS UPDATES: See Activity 1 below

III. PROJECT ACTIVITIES AND OUTCOMES:

ACTIVITY 1: Land Acquisition

Description: Option contracts are in place and give the City of Harmony exclusive right to purchase the entire trail corridor, but the options expire December 31, 2019. The City of Harmony will utilize its experienced staff to facilitate all the technical aspects of the project and transactions, including but not limited to surveying and appraisals.

ENRTF BUDGET: \$235,000

Outcome	Completion Date
1. City of Harmony exercises its option contracts to purchase 16 parcels for the trail corridor.	June 2020
2. City of Harmony Facilitates land appraisal, survey, and transactional work for trail corridor purchase.	June 2020
3. City of Harmony donates trail corridor to State/DNR once corridor is acquired	June 2020

First Update January 31, 2019

- Per discussion with LCCMR staff on 2/21/19, since no expenditures had taken place yet, no formal report was due. Emailed confirmation with LCCMR staff on 2/21/19.

Second Update June 28, 2019

- Due to surveying delays caused by weather, no expenditures have taken place yet. Emailed confirmation with LCCMR staff on 6/28/19.

Third Update December 20, 2019

- Due to surveying delays caused by weather and complexities of administering the land transactions, no expenditures have taken place yet. Will be completed with the project soon, but not prior to the end of 2019 as originally planned. Emailed update and amendment request to LCCMR staff on 12/20/19.

Amendment Request 4/18/19:

An extension of our final project deadline is requested from 6/30/2019 to 12/31/2019. Winter weather prevented our surveyor from making as much progress on individual parcel surveys as originally planned. In addition to weather, Fillmore County had to identify section corners which had never been identified before in order for our surveyor to begin work. Between these two unforeseen issues, we won't be able to complete our project by 6/30/2019 as originally planned. We estimate that our actual work will be completed sometime in July 2019 but are requesting a 6 month extension to plan for any other unforeseen issues that may occur.

Currently our project is well underway and making good progress given the setbacks noted. The surveyor is nearly finished with his survey work at which point our attorney will review and confirm with the DNR that the trail route meets their specifications. Once the DNR confirms the final alignment of the trail route, appraisals will be ordered and completed, and our attorney will handled closings with individual landowners and final donation of the land purchased to the DNR per our work plan.

Amendment Request 12/20/19:

An extension of our final project deadline is requested from 12/31/2019 to 6/30/2020.

As noted in our amendment request from 4/18/2019, winter weather prevented our surveyor from making progress on individual parcel surveys as originally planned. In addition to weather, Fillmore County had to identify section corners which had never been identified before in order for our surveyor to begin work. Between these two unforeseen issues, we were not able to complete our project by 6/30/2019 as originally planned. At the time of our prior amendment request we estimated that our work would be completed sometime in July 2019 but requested a 6 month extension to plan for any other unforeseen issues that may occur. Because of the logistical complexities of facilitating numerous land transactions with multiple parties, compounded by the issues noted above, we will not be able to wrap up the project by 12/31/2019 as planned.

Currently our project is well underway and making good progress given the setbacks noted. The surveyor has completed the surveys and is nearly complete with staking the property to be acquired. The city’s attorney for this project has completed all the title opinion work and is currently facilitating transaction closings on the real estate purchases. We are nearly complete.

➔ Amendment Approved by LCCMR 1/23/2020

Amendment Request 6/19/2020

A budget amendment is requested to move \$4,837.00 from our landowner payments expense line item to our surveying/transaction expense line item. This should accommodate all final costs for the project, but we had a slight overrun on transactional costs from our original projection. Several easements needed to be surveyed and recorded to accommodate landowners who neighbor the trail corridor, which caused our original projected surveying/transaction cost line item to be short by \$4,837.00. No other budget amendments are anticipated. We are otherwise ready to submit our final report to LCCMR once this amendment is approved.

➔ Amendment Approved by LCCMR 6/26/2020

Final Update June 30, 2020

The project is complete. 20 parcels were purchased fee title by the City of Harmony and will be donated to the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources for the construction of the state trail extension, per this project’s authorizing legislation. All survey, legal, and administrative work related to these acquisitions is also complete.

Land Acquisition Report Information:

Land acquisition reports were all uploaded on 03/24/2020. The following are the report ID’s generated:

- 20-045-001
- 20-045-002
- 20-045-003
- 20-045-004
- 20-045-005
- 20-045-006
- 20-045-007
- 20-045-008
- 20-045-009
- 20-045-010
- 20-045-011
- 20-045-012
- 20-045-013
- 20-045-014
- 20-045-015

IV. DISSEMINATION:

Description: All project information will be coordinated, handled, and disseminated by the City of Harmony and its staff. Because of the nature of this project, the dissemination of the project’s status and results (i.e. completion of acquisition of the trail corridor) will be disseminated by a media press release at the completion of the project. Credit will be given to the private landowners to made the project possible, project volunteers, LCCMR members, the Minnesota Legislature and Governor, our local legislators, the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, and city staff. Project files and information will be kept at the city offices located in the Harmony Community Center and will be available to the public for review upon request. “Funding provided by” signage utilizing the trust fund logo will be placed on the bike trial route.

First Update January 31, 2019

Second Update June 30, 2019

Third Update December 31, 2019

Final Update June 30, 2020

V. PROJECT BUDGET SUMMARY:

A. Preliminary ENRTF Budget Overview: See Attached budget spreadsheet

B. Explanation of Capital Expenditures Greater Than \$5,000: Fee title purchase of parcels for the Harmony State Trail Extension and associated transactional costs.

Explanation of Use of Classified Staff: N/A

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

Enter Total Estimated Personnel Hours: 0	Divide by 2,080 = TOTAL FTE:
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Total Number of Full-time Equivalents (FTE) Estimated to Be Funded through Contracts with this ENRTF Appropriation:

Enter Total Estimated Personnel Hours: 0	Divide by 2,080 = TOTAL FTE:
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C. Other Funds:

SOURCE OF AND USE OF OTHER FUNDS	Amount Proposed	Amount Spent	Status and Timeframe
Other Non-State \$ To Be Applied To Project During Project Period:			
Grant for trail acquisition – Harmony Area Community Foundation	\$15,000	\$0	Secured. Available when needed.
City staff time (estimated at \$100/ hr for two people, for 100 hours total)	\$10,000	\$0	Committed
Other State \$ To Be Applied To Project During Project Period:			
	\$	\$	
Past and Current ENRTF Appropriation:			

	\$	\$	
Other Funding History:			
Cost of land purchase option contracts – City of Harmony	\$25,000	\$25,000	Secured & expended.

VI. PROJECT PARTNERS:

A. Partners receiving ENRTF funding

Name	Title	Affiliation	Role
None			

B. Partners NOT receiving ENRTF funding

Name	Title	Affiliation	Role
MN DNR			
Harmony EDA		Implementation partner	Additional staff assistance
Harmony Trails Commission		Implementation partner	Volunteer assistance
Niagara Cave		Implementation partner	Volunteer assistance
Northeast Iowa Trails		Implementation partner	Volunteer assistance

VII. LONG-TERM- IMPLEMENTATION AND FUNDING:

The City of Harmony will utilize ENRTF funds to acquire fee title interest in the described parcels in order to secure the proposed trail route discussed in this work plan. Once purchased, the City will donate the land to the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR). The DNR has acknowledged willingness to accept this donation. The ultimate goal is to construct a trail in this corridor, but construction is not a part of this request. Funding for construction of the trail is proposed through bonding legislation (HF 161 & SF 67). The finished trail would be owned and maintained by the DNR.

VIII. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS:

- The project is for 1 year, will begin on 7/1/18, and end on 6/30/19.
- Periodic project status update reports will be submitted January 31 and June 30 of each year.
- A final report and associated products will be submitted between June 30 and August 15, 2019.

IX. SEE ADDITIONAL WORK PLAN COMPONENTS:

- A. Budget Spreadsheet
- B. Visual Component or Map
- C. Parcel List Spreadsheet
- D. Acquisition, Easements, and Restoration Requirements
- E. Research Addendum

**Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund
M.L. 2018 Budget Spreadsheet - Final**



Project Title: Harmony State Trail Extension Land Acquisition

Legal Citation: M.L. 2018, Chp. 214, Art. 4, Sec. 02, Subd. 09c

Project Manager: Chris Giesen

Organization: City of Harmony

College/Department/Division:

M.L. 2018 ENRTF Appropriation:

Project Length and Completion Date: 2 years, June 30, 2020

Date of Report: 06/30/2020

ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES TRUST FUND BUDGET	Revised Budget 6/26/2020	Amount Spent	Balance
BUDGET ITEM			
Professional/Technical/Service Contracts	\$39,837	\$39,837	\$0
The City of Harmony will hire a DNR approved appraiser & qualified surveyor to determine acquisition value and legal description of the 16 parcels to be acquired. (Experienced City staff will facilitate all transactional details. No contracts for such work are in place at this time with vendors.)			
Fee-Title Acquisition			
Landowner payments	\$195,163	\$156,529	\$38,634
COLUMN TOTAL	\$235,000	\$196,366	\$38,634