

## **[2015] Project Abstract**

For the Period Ending June 30, 2017

**PROJECT TITLE:** Redwood and Renville Counties Outdoor Recreation and Conservation Master Plan

**PROJECT MANAGER:** Scott Refsland

**AFFILIATION:** Redwood County and Renville County

**MAILING ADDRESS:** 105 South 5<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite 311

**CITY/STATE/ZIP:** Olivia, MN 56277

**PHONE:** 320-523-3664

**E-MAIL:** scottr@renvillecountymn.com

**WEBSITE:** www.renvillecountymn.com

**FUNDING SOURCE:** Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund)

**LEGAL CITATION:** [M.L. 2015, Chp 76, Sec. 2, Subd. 08k]

**APPROPRIATION AMOUNT:** \$75,000.00

**AMOUNT SPENT:** \$74,995.14

**AMOUNT REMAINING:** \$4.81

### **Overall Project Outcomes and Results**

The development of a Minnesota River Valley Recreation and Conservation Master Plan is complete and all deliverables in the contract with the consultant have been delivered. The development of this plan has resulted in a solid direction to advance the interests of improving the recreation and conservation opportunities in the valley. Once adopted by the Counties, this plan provides a prioritized list of action items to begin immediate implementation. This will hopefully result in an increased use and respect for the incredible resource that is shared by Renville and Redwood Counties.

The Master Planning process resulted in a large collection of public opinion from both local residents as well as those outside of the area. Our public meetings had many local residents and averaged an attendance of around 35 people per meeting. Our online survey collected 382 usable surveys from 42 different counties in Minnesota. The data collected from the public was necessary to create this plan, but will also provide many benefits for other efforts in the area for years to come.

The Master Plan is a catalyst for future conversation about how to invest in the Valley for ways to increase the value and benefits of valley resources for those who live in or visit the area. The shared vision in this plan creates a picture of what the Valley can become in the future.

### **Project Results Use and Dissemination**

All outcomes have been completed with some amendments being made to Outcome 6. Throughout the course of this project it became clear that providing detailed cost estimates was overly ambitious and beyond the scope of this project. Strategies for prioritizing land use decisions and long term funding opportunities and project management were completed. We held one more public meeting than stated with an additional meeting to present the final plan to the public. Final Master Plan was printed and sent to the counties in June 2017 along with digital copies of all files created by consultant throughout this project.

The final master plan is available on both counties websites along with the project page website (<http://www.mnrivervalleymasterplan.org/home>). The final plan will now go before both County boards for approval and to begin implementation.



# Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund (ENRTF)

## M.L. 2015 Work Plan

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**Date of Report:** July 24, 2017

**Date of Next Status Update Report:** N/A

**Date of Work Plan Approval:** June 11, 2015

**Project Completion Date:** June 30, 2017

**Does this submission include an amendment request?** NO

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**PROJECT TITLE:** Redwood and Renville Counties Outdoor Recreation and Conservation Master Plan

**Project Manager:** Scott Refsland

**Organization:** Redwood County and Renville County

**Mailing Address:** 105 South 5<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite 315

**City/State/Zip Code:** Olivia, MN 56277

**Telephone Number:** (320) 523-3664

**Email Address:** scottr@renvillecountymn.com

**Web Address:** www.renvillecountymn.com

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**Location:**

Region: Redwood County and Renville County

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**Total ENRTF Project Budget:**

**ENRTF Appropriation:** \$75,000.00

**Amount Spent:** \$74,995.19

**Balance:** \$4.81

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**Legal Citation:** M.L. 2015, Chp. 76, Sec. 2, Subd. 08k

**Appropriation Language:**

\$75,000 the first year is from the trust fund to the commissioner of natural resources for an agreement with Renville County in cooperation with Redwood County to develop a joint outdoor recreation and conservation master plan to guide future development and protect cultural, historical, and natural resources in the Minnesota River Valley.

## **I. PROJECT TITLE:** Redwood and Renville Counties Outdoor Recreation and Conservation Master Plan

### **II. PROJECT STATEMENT:**

The portion of the Minnesota River Valley shared by Redwood and Renville Counties is a unique and special asset to our citizens as well as the State of Minnesota. The counties recognize the need to protect, restore, and enhance the natural, historical, and cultural resources of the Minnesota River Valley for future generations to explore and enjoy. The counties also recognize that the Minnesota River Valley provides an economic opportunity to develop an outdoor recreational destination that would promote regional economic growth, development, and tourism.

The proposed project will provide professional planning services to assist in creating a locally driven and managed master planning document that will provide strategies to guide future development of an outdoor recreational and conservation area within the Minnesota River Valley. The plan will provide a vision and strategies to guide development of high quality, regional outdoor recreational opportunities while integrating education and awareness of our historical, cultural, and archeological sites and features. The plan will guide the development of standards and conservation strategies for the protection and preservation of the valley's sensitive natural resources. The plan will also incorporate decision-making tools to guide wise and sustainable land use and acquisition decisions, capital improvements, and investment decisions.

### **III. OVERALL PROJECT STATUS UPDATES:**

**Project Status as of:** January 27, 2016 – Redwood and Renville Counties have selected a 10-member task force, consisting of two county commissioners, two county administrators, four county staff members, and two citizens, that will begin the process of selecting a professional planning consultant for the project through a request for proposal and interview process. The task force will help guide the process and provide feedback to the planning consultant during each of the project phases. The task force's initial meeting is planned for February 5, 2016.

**Project Status as of:** July 15, 2016 – The Minnesota Valley Master Plan Task Force met on February 5, 2016. The Task Force reviewed the 2015 work plan, determined the project area, and proposed request for proposal information. Request for Proposal submittal date was March 4, 2016. Nine proposals were submitted. The task force met on March 14, 2016 and selected three consultants, Great Outdoors Consulting, SRF, and HKGI, for oral interviews. Interviews were held on April 8, 2016. The project was awarded to Great Outdoors Consulting for \$75,000.00 and a Services Agreement was signed by Renville County, Fiscal Agent, on April 25, 2016. Work on the project began on May 6, 2016 with a meeting with Great Outdoors Consulting to refine the project scope of work. Telephone conferences were held on June 13 and June 15 to further discuss the work plan. On-site work will begin on July 13 – 15, 2016 including a drive of and canoe trip through portions of the river valley.

**Project Status as of:** January 15, 2017 – On August 10, 2016 we conducted a conference call with the MNRV Master Plan Planning Team. On August 24, 2016 we held an all-day planning workshop with the MNRV Master Plan Planning Team to review the Preliminary Vision, Program Development, and Organization of the project. On August 25, 2016 we held a half day abbreviated workshop with the MNRV Master Plan Task Force to review the Preliminary Vision, Program Development, and Organization of the project. On September 26, 2016 we conducted a conference call with the MNRV Master Plan Task Force. Agenda included updates on the webpage, stakeholder interviews, master plan elements, online survey, and upcoming tasks. On September 27, 2016 we held our first public meeting in Olivia. Roughly 40 people in attendance. Consultants provided an overview of the project and then facilitated small group discussions. On September 28, 2016 we held our second public meeting in Redwood Falls. Roughly 40 people in attendance. Consultants provided an overview of the project and then facilitated small group discussions. On October 17, 2016 we conducted a conference call with MNRV Master Plan Planning Team to review the workshop, discuss online survey results, review website statistics and plan next steps.

On November 21, 2016 we conducted a conference call with MNRV Master Plan Planning Team to discuss progress on current tasks and set upcoming tasks. We decided to postpone the next set of public meetings until a later date to accommodate the DNR's planning process. On December 19, 2016 we conducted a video conference call with MNRV Master Plan Planning Team to review the first draft of the Master Plan. On January 11, 2017 we conducted a conference call with the MNRV Master Plan Planning Team to receive status update on all areas of the plan.

Upcoming: We have a MNRV Master Plan Task Force meeting scheduled for January 19, 2017. Our next set of public meetings is scheduled for February 15 and 16, 2017.

**Project Status as of:** July 31, 2017 – On January 19<sup>th</sup> we conducted a conference call with the MNRV Master Plan Task Force to discuss how to prioritize the implementation tasks, review the draft master plan presentation, and discuss summary statements. On January 20<sup>th</sup>, we conducted a conference call between the two counties and the DNR to discuss scheduling of our planning processes. On January 31<sup>st</sup> we held a presentation for Redwood and Renville County Commissioners to bring some of the newly elected members up to speed on the planning process. On February 9<sup>th</sup> we held a conference call with the MNRV Master Plan Task Force to discuss our plans for the public meetings on February 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup>. On February 15<sup>th</sup> we held our second public meeting in Renville County. On February 16<sup>th</sup> we held our second public meeting in Redwood County. On February 16<sup>th</sup> we held a MNRV Master Plan Planning Team meeting to discuss the details and specifics about the final plan. On March 20<sup>th</sup> we conducted a conference call with the MNRV Master Plan Task Force to review the workshop 2 report and email to stakeholders, the style of the final master plan, what our final review process would be, and how we will receive ongoing public comments. On April 14<sup>th</sup> we held a MNRV Master Plan Task Force meeting to review the current master plan edits, set timelines for the counties and DNR to review, and to set the general schedule for the rest of the project. On April 28<sup>th</sup> we held a MNRV Master Plan Task Force meeting to continue to review our final planning process. On May 2<sup>nd</sup> we held a MNRV Master Plan Task Force meeting to discuss how possible ongoing cooperation between DNR and the Counties might work. On June 8<sup>th</sup> we held a final public meeting to present the final Master Plan to the public in Redwood Falls. On June 20<sup>th</sup> we conducted a conference call with the MNRV Master Plan Task Force to review the last public meeting and discuss how to address the remaining additional comments. On July 18<sup>th</sup> we held a conference call with the MNRV Master Plan Task Force to discuss contract closeout with the consultant and how to transfer over the webpage and project e-mail address.

**Overall Project Outcomes and Results:**

The development of a Minnesota River Valley Recreation and Conservation Master is complete and all deliverables in the contract with the consultant have been delivered. The development of this plan has resulted in a solid direction to advance the interests of improving the recreation and conservation opportunities in the valley. Once adopted by the Counties, this plan provides a prioritized list of action items to begin immediate implementation. This will hopefully result in an increased use and respect for the incredible resource that is shared by Renville and Redwood Counties

The Master Planning process resulted in a large collection of public opinion from both local residents as well as those outside of the area. Our public meetings had many local residents and averaged an attendance of around 35 people per meeting. Our online survey collected 382 usable surveys from 42 different counties in Minnesota. The data collected from the public was necessary to create this plan, but will also provide many benefits for other efforts in the area for years to come.

The Master Plan is a catalyst for future conversation about how to invest in the Valley for ways to increase the value and benefits of valley resources for those who live in or visit the area. The shared vision in this plan creates a picture of what the Valley can become in the future.

**IV. PROJECT ACTIVITIES AND OUTCOMES:**

**ACTIVITY 1:**

**Description:** Development of outdoor recreation and conservation master plan for the Minnesota River Valley. Redwood/Renville County will utilize the services of a professional planning consultant to provide design services for development of outdoor recreation and conservation master plan. The planning consultant will oversee each of the project phases that will include information gathering, findings and visioning, and plan development and completion. Information gathering will include the holding of public meetings and interviews, public surveys of county residents, inventory and assessment of existing facilities, historical, cultural and archeological sites and features, and analysis of demographics and trends. Findings and visioning will include review of the findings and analysis and development of plan recommendations. Plan development will include development of the master plan, capital improvement cost estimates, land acquisition decision making tools, long term funding, operation, and marketing strategies. The planning consultant will hold four open houses to present the plan and seek input from the public to complete the final master planning document.

**Summary Budget Information for Activity 1:**

**ENRTF Budget: \$ 75,000.00**  
**Amount Spent: \$ 74,995.19**  
**Balance: \$ 4.81**

<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Completion Date</b>
1. Inventory of existing area outdoor recreation facilities and services and historical, cultural, and archeological sites and features.	August 2016
2. Analysis of demographics, population projections, and trends to identify needed park facility and trail improvements and new outdoor recreational uses and opportunities.	September 2016
3. Analysis of outdoor recreational usage patterns and preferences, and use of existing parks and trails through public meetings, focus groups, stakeholder interviews, and surveys.	October 2016
4. Identification of ecological and natural areas that should be preserved, protected, or restored.	November 2016
5. Development of draft outdoor recreation and conservation park and trail master plan.	February 2017
6. Development of capital improvement cost estimates, decision making tools for sustainable and wise land use and acquisition decisions, and long-term funding and operational strategies to implement and sustain master plan recommendations.	March 2017
7. Development of marketing tools and strategies to increase tourism by raising awareness of the Minnesota River Valley as an outdoor recreation destination.	April 2017
8. Hold four open house meetings.	May 2017
9. Completion of outdoor recreation and conservation park and trail master plan.	June 2017

**Activity Status as of:** January 27, 2016 – No work has been completed at this time. A Redwood/Renville County Task Force has been empowered to begin the process for the selection of a professional planning consultant in February 2016.

**Activity Status as of:** July 15, 2016 - On-site work will begin on July 13 – 15, 2016 including a drive of and canoe trip through portions of the river valley.

**Activity Status as of:** January 15, 2017 – Initial work in developing the master plan has been completed. We have held 2 public meetings to gather input from the public and conducted an online survey. Outcomes 1-4 are complete or mostly complete at this time. Outcome 5 is in progress. Our consultant has completed a

preliminary draft master plan that has been reviewed by the MNRV Master Plan Planning Team. Upcoming meetings with the Task Force and then the Public will further review the Master Plan. Half of Outcome 8 is complete since we have held two open house meetings at this time. Completion of outcomes 6, 7, and 9 is still in progress.

**Final Report Summary:** All outcomes have been completed with some amendments being made to Outcome 6. Throughout the course of this project it became clear that providing detailed cost estimates was overly ambitious and beyond the scope of this project. Strategies for prioritizing land use decisions and long term funding opportunities and project management were completed. We held one more public meeting than stated with an additional meeting to present the final plan to the public. Final Master Plan was printed and sent to the counties in June 2017 along with digital copies of all files created by consultant throughout this project.

**V. DISSEMINATION:**

**Description:** All information compiled may be viewed by the public at the Renville County website at [www.renvillecountymn.com](http://www.renvillecountymn.com).

**Status as of:** January 27, 2016 – No work has been completed at this time.

**Status as of:** July 15, 2016 – Great Outdoors Consulting will be providing links to the website of project information and updates as work progresses.

**Status as of:** January 15, 2017 – Our project website is up and running and accessible at <http://www.mnrivervalleymasterplan.org>.

**Status as of:** July 24, 2017 – Final master plan is accessible at our project webpage - <http://www.mnrivervalleymasterplan.org>.

**Final Report Summary:** The final master plan is available on both counties websites along with the project page website. The final plan will now go before both County boards for approval and to begin implementation.

**VI. PROJECT BUDGET SUMMARY:**

**A. ENRTF Budget Overview:**

Budget Category	\$ Amount	Overview Explanation
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Professional/Technical/Service Contracts: Great Outdoors Consulting	\$ 75,000.00	The budget will be used for the hiring of a professional planning consultant to provide design services for development of outdoor recreation and conservation master plan. The planning consultant will oversee each of the project phases that will include information gathering, findings and visioning, and plan development and completion. Information gathering will include the holding of public meetings and interviews, public surveys of county residents, inventory and assessment of existing facilities, historical, cultural and archeological sites and features, and analysis of demographics and trends. Findings and visioning will include review of the findings and analysis and development of plan recommendations. Plan development will include development of the master plan, capital improvement cost estimates, land acquisition decision making tools, long term funding, operation, and marketing strategies. The planning consultant will hold four open houses to present the plan and seek input from the public to complete the final master planning document.
<b>TOTAL ENRTF BUDGET: \$ 75,000.00</b>		

**Explanation of Use of Classified Staff:** N/A

**Explanation of Capital Expenditures Greater Than \$5,000:** N/A

**Number of Full-time Equivalents (FTE) Directly Funded with this ENRTF Appropriation:** N/A

**Number of Full-time Equivalents (FTE) Estimated to Be Funded through Contracts with this ENRTF Appropriation:** N/A

**B. Other Funds:**

Source of Funds	\$ Amount Proposed	\$ Amount Spent	Use of Other Funds
<b>Non-state</b>			
In-kind services- Redwood/Renville County	\$ 4,000.00	\$ 2,500.00	Development of request for proposal (RFP), interviewing and hiring of planning consultant, supplies, facilitation, travel, grant administration, data collection and research
			Development of RFP, task force meeting agendas and research, Interviews, letters to consultants, service agreement review, meeting and phone

			conferences with Great Outdoor Consultants
<b>TOTAL OTHER FUNDS:</b>	<b>\$ 4,000.00</b>	<b>\$ 2,500.00</b>	

**VII. PROJECT STRATEGY:**

**A. Project Partners:**

**Project Partners receiving ENRTF grant funding**

- A planning consultant, to be selected through a request for proposal and interview process, will be hired and provide design services for the development of the outdoor recreation and conservation master plan.

**Project Partners providing in-kind services**

- Renville County Division of Environment and Community Development and Redwood County Administrator’s Office – Project coordinators for Redwood and Renville Counties; conduct research and provide project background information; review plan design and provide feedback; logistics facilitation for public meetings , surveys, and focus groups; and grant administration.

**Project Partners not receiving ENRTF grant funding**

- Redwood County Parks and Trails Committee – Master plan design consultation
- Renville County Park Commission – Master plan design consultation
- Renville County Trail Committee – Master plan design consultation
- Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) – Provide input regarding state parks and recreational lands and development of DNR Minnesota River Valley Master Plan

**B. Project Impact and Long-term Strategy:**

The long-term strategy of the Redwood/Renville County Outdoor Recreation and Conservation Master Plan is to position Redwood/Renville Counties as a regional outdoor recreational destination that will introduce new people to our area and the Minnesota River Valley; celebrate our counties’ history and culture; connect recreational, historical, and cultural sites to the Minnesota River National Scenic Byway, Minnesota State River Trail, and the Minnesota River State Trail; promote environmental education and incorporate conservation best management practices; and guide development for future recreation and conservation project opportunities.

**C. Funding History:** N/A

**VIII. FEE TITLE ACQUISITION/CONSERVATION EASEMENT/RESTORATION REQUIREMENTS:**

**A. Parcel List:** N/A

**B. Acquisition/Restoration Information:** N/A

**IX. VISUAL COMPONENT or MAP(S):** See attached graphic

**X. RESEARCH ADDENDUM:** N/A

**XI. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS:**

**Periodic work plan status update reports will be submitted no later than** January 15, 2016, July 15, 2016, and January 15, 2017. **A final report and associated products will be submitted in** July 2017.



**Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund**  
**M.L. 2015 Project Budget**



**Project Title:** Redwood and Renville Counties Outdoor Recreation and Conservation Master Plan

**Legal Citation:** M.L. 2015, Chp. 76, Sec. 2, Subd. 08k

**Project Manager:** Scott Refsland

**Organization:** Redwood County and Renville County

**M.L. 2015 ENRTF Appropriation:** \$ 75,000.00

**Project Length and Completion Date:** 2 years, June 30, 2017

**30-Jun-17**

<b>ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES TRUST FUND BUDGET</b>	<b>Activity 1 Budget</b>	<b>Amount Spent</b>	<b>Activity 1 Balance</b>	<b>TOTAL BUDGET</b>	<b>TOTAL BALANCE</b>
<b>BUDGET ITEM</b>	Development of Outdoor Recreation and Conservation Master Plan				
<b>Professional/Technical/Service Contracts</b>	\$75,000	\$74,995.14	\$4.81	\$75,000	\$4.81
The budget will be used for the hiring of a professional planning consultant to provide design services for development of outdoor recreation and conservation master plan. The planning consultant will oversee each of the project phases that will include information gathering, findings and visioning, and plan development and completion. Information gathering will include the holding of public meetings and interviews, public surveys of county residents, inventory and assessment of existing facilities, historical, cultural and archeological sites and features, and analysis of demographics and trends. Findings and visioning will include review of the findings and analysis and development of plan recommendations. Plan development will include development of the master plan, capital improvement cost estimates, land acquisition decision making tools, long term funding, operation, and marketing strategies. The planning consultant will hold four open houses to present the plan and seek input from the public to complete the final plan completion.					
<b>COLUMN TOTAL</b>	<b>\$75,000</b>	<b>\$74,995.14</b>	<b>\$4.81</b>	<b>\$75,000</b>	<b>\$4.81</b>