



DNR's 2016 Capital Budget Request



The Governor recommends \$72,500,000 for the Department of Natural Resources' (DNR) capital budget. This funding will create a better future for Minnesota by targeting investments that maintain a strong and safe infrastructure, creates jobs, supports local economies, develops recreational opportunities, and improves natural resources.

Natural Resources Asset Preservation (\$33 million)

Natural resources asset preservation (M.S. 84.946) repairs and renovates DNR buildings, roads, bridges, trails, water control structures, and water access sites. Historically, asset preservation has been significantly underfunded.

The DNR owns and actively maintains:

- 2,714 buildings at over 200 locations statewide
- more than 3,300 miles of roads
- 620 miles of paved trails, 100 miles of which need rehabilitation
- 350 trail bridges some with weight restrictions.

In 2014, the DNR completed a facility condition assessment and found that:

- 204 of our buildings are in "crisis" unacceptable condition
- 533 of our buildings are in "poor" condition
- To bring DNR's poor and unacceptable buildings up to standards will cost \$55 million

DNR conducted an assessment of our capital needs for the next 10 years and found:

- \$342 million in deferred maintenance and on-going renewal and replacement needs of \$98 million annually
- To address deferred maintenance, renewal, and replacement within the next 10 years for all DNR assets would cost \$132 million annually

- The Ten Year Capital Needs report can be found [Capital Needs Report](http://files/aboutdnr/bureaus/mr/10yr-cap-asset-plan.pdf) (<http://files/aboutdnr/bureaus/mr/10yr-cap-asset-plan.pdf>)

About 500 projects across the state would be funded by the 2016 capital budget request and include:

- \$4.4 million to rehabilitate unacceptable building components and \$3.5 million to repair poor building components, for example: making accessibility improvements; roof, door, window, and siding replacements; mechanical and electrical system repairs; energy improvements; and water, well, and septic projects
- Project locations include: Rice Lake office, Talcot shop, Soudan hoist, Fort Snelling Upper Post road and sewer, Itasca Park sewer and forest roads

Buildings and Facilities Development (\$2 million)

This request includes design and construction of park sanitation buildings, office buildings, storage facilities, and pre-design for consolidation of facilities in Bemidji. Substandard DNR facilities are unsafe, not accessible to the public, and inefficient. This funding complements the asset preservation funding request.

Flood Hazard Mitigation (\$3.5 million)

These funds would go towards completing critical flood mitigation projects, including Montevideo and Halstad. Since 1988, the Flood Hazard Mitigation Program has provided technical and financial assistance to local units of government to reduce flood damages in the state. Investing in flood hazard mitigation reduces future costs – the Federal Emergency Management Agency estimates that every \$1 spent on mitigation prevents \$4 in damages.

Mille Lacs Fishery Station (\$3.5 million)

This project will develop a new facility at Mille Lacs Lake including a fisheries management station, fish hatchery, and storage to efficiently and effectively meet fish management, stocking, research and outreach needs. The Fishery Station will contribute to restoring and sustaining high-quality fishing opportunities on Mille Lacs Lake.

Dam Repair, Reconstruction, Removal (\$7 million)

This request would be for Bronson Dam in Lake Bronson State Park. High hazard dams have the potential for significant damage or loss of life. In Minnesota, over 600 dams are owned by the state, counties, cities, and watershed districts. Most of the dams are over 50 years old and require ongoing attention to keep them safe.

State Land Reforestation and Stand Improvement (\$2 million)

This request will support one season of reforestation on approximately 12,500 acres, including purchasing native tree seeds and seedlings, planting, seeding, site preparation and protecting seedlings from animal browse on state lands. Reforestation and stand improvement are

vital to creation of future forests to support and maintain forest-based economies, wildlife habitat, clean air and water, and recreational opportunities.

Native Prairie Acquisition and Development (\$2 million)

This request would conserve approximately 200 acres of native prairie through conservation easements on privately owned native prairie and provide for the development and restoration of native prairie bank lands. Minnesota once had 18 million acres of prairie; only about one percent of that (235,000 acres) remains today and nearly half of the remaining prairie is threatened.

Itasca State Park Renovations (\$3 million)

Itasca State Park is celebrating its 125th birthday in 2016 and its facilities are showing their age. These funds will improve accessibility, safety, the historic Nicollet Court building, the public water access, and reforest 800 acres.

Pheasant Habitat Acquisition and Development (\$9.5 million)

This request provides funds to acquire and develop about 2,000 acres of habitat in Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs) and Aquatic Management Areas (AMAs) in implementation of the State's new Pheasant Plan.

State Park Campground Renovations (\$1 million)

This funding would provide for improvements to the Jay Cooke State Park campground and would begin work on others. The state park system has about 4,000 campsites. Many sanitation buildings and other facilities no longer meet the needs of campers. Renovations are needed to meet building code, safety, and accessibility requirements.

State Parks, Recreation Areas, and Trail Development (\$2 million)

This funding would be used to acquire and develop key recreational features in state parks, state recreation areas, and state trails. These funds would be focused on projects that can leverage federal funds or be constructed quickly including the Gitchi-Gami trail at Tofte; Clausen Avenue connection to the Paul Bunyan Trail in Bemidji; the Heartland Trail – Tower Hill Project in Walker; and also

to prepare for future needs by funding design work now, such as the Vermilion Visitor Center.

Fish Hatchery Development (\$1 million)

The DNR has 19 fish hatcheries that need ongoing improvements to efficiently and effectively meet fish stocking needs. In addition to operational improvements, upgrades to hatcheries will include measures to control diseases and invasive species. Lanesboro, Park Rapids, Brainerd, and Waterville hatcheries are priority projects.

Scientific and Natural Areas Acquisition and Development (\$1 million)

This request would be used to acquire key parcels and to develop about 200 acres of existing Scientific and Natural Areas (SNAs), including signing, fencing, removal of existing infrastructure, and providing basic parking facilities. There are 163 SNA's in the state, which protect some of the rarest habitats and species in the state.

RIM Critical Habitat Match (\$2 million)

This funding is needed to match private donations (MS 84.943). On average the RIM Critical Habitat Match program could utilize an additional \$1.8 million per year in matching funds. These funds provide for acquisition and improvements for wildlife management areas, scientific and natural areas (SNA's), aquatic management areas (AMA's), state parks, and state forests. Since 1986, this program has leveraged more than \$81 million in donations to protect and enhance over 173,000 acres.

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