



General

This section provides the basic information about the park or trail and the organizations responsible for it.

Park/Trail ID # 16-010D	Funding Application 18-026F	Park/Trail Name Red Lake River Corridor
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Last Update
July 31, 2018

Project Name Red Lake River Corridor 2018	District 2	Existing Acres or Miles 175
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Project Description

The RLRC Joint Powers Board (JPB) was established in 2003 to encourage residential use of the river, grow tourist interest in the river, and establish an avenue for long-term planning for the corridor. To accomplish these goals and ultimately increase resident and tourist use of the river, the JPB created, prioritized, and are now submitting several project descriptions, including:

Project 1: Vehicle barriers and parking access for sites in East Grand Forks—This project maintains trails by limiting vehicle access throughout the Greenway, a stretch of 20+ miles of multi-use trails and 2,200 acres of greenspace. Addition of vehicle barriers promotes trail safety and prevents park space erosion.

Project 2: Folsom Park Old Boat Landing paddle access and fishing pier in East Grand Forks—A popular fishing spot and former boat launch, this site is one mile upstream from Eagle Point trailhead. Adding an ADA-accessible kayak and canoe ramp improves the accessibility of the Red Lake River and encourages greater participation.

Project 3: LaFave Park fishing pier and park access in East Grand Forks—This park features a boat launch, softball fields, and a football practice field. Currently, a lot of the park's property is undeveloped and under-maintenanced along the river, yet the park is popular with fishers. By adding infrastructure, the project will provide a better and safer experience for fishers.

Project 4: Central Park Campground in Crookston—Located in downtown Crookston and adjacent to several amenities including a swimming pool, library, movie theater, and dozens of small businesses, this project improves an existing campground. Upgrades include a new bath house that would provide public, ADA-accessible bathrooms and a storm shelter for park users.

Project 5: Sportsman Park Campground in Red Lake Falls—Building on an Enbridge grant, this site connects to three miles of paved trails. This proposal builds new campsites and a new bath house that would enable more families to use the park and campsite.

Project 6: Trail improvements at Island Park in St. Hilaire—Current natural trails are well traveled but deteriorating due to ATV use. This project funds vehicle barriers, improves natural trails, and builds a small parking area outside of the trails.

Project 7: Oakland Park multi-use trail in Thief River Falls—Adjacent to the Oakland Park nursing home and assisted living center, Oakland Park features playground equipment, volleyball courts, paved parking, and river access. This project re-establishes a multi-use trail in the Park.

Community engagement (Projects 8 and 9): Community Paddle events and International Water Institute school programming educate the community about the history and importance of the river as well as provide opportunities to get out in the river in a supervised environment with equipment provided. The JPB is also discussing overland trail connectivity within and between cities as a next phase after it achieves consistent, gap-free river access. As a result of infrastructure improvement, the JPB expects the following outcomes:

- Increased residential use of the river, resulting in a better quality of life, better public health outcomes, and

more equitable access to outdoor recreational opportunities --Increased tourism, contributing to local economies and improving the overall economic development of all six cities and three counties --Better physical accessibility to the river, expanding health and recreation equity outcomes --Better ability to maintain new access points and sites --Better individual stewardship of public lands and waters as a result of strong corridor identity and education

Project Area Maps

RLRC Project Maps

http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/funding/18-026F/2018_RLRC_Project_Map_b88ee4.pdf

Organization City of Crookston	Lead Contact Full Name Shannon Stassen	Lead Contact Title City Administrator
Mailing Address 124 N. Broadway	City Crookston	State Minnesota
Zip 56716	Phone (218) 281-1232	Email sstassen@crookston.mn.us

Funding

Development Type Both	Acres of Park Land to be Acquired 0
New Trail Miles to be Acquired 0	Types
New Trail Miles Developed 1	Miles of Trail Restored or Improved 3
Trail head facilities developed 0	Number of trail bridges/culverts to be developed/restored 0
Number of Connecting People to the Outdoors Programs created/administered 2	

Project Outcomes

Evaluation of Impact

While the number and type of Red Lake River users is not readily available, many have observed increased use. The JPB has access to more specific numbers in certain instances, including campsite payments, number of people in attendance at community paddle events, and number of children receiving watershed education.

Quantifying use of the river currently is a difficult task, but the Joint Powers Board plans to implement the following tools to assist in gauging how many and in what way users recreate on the river:

- Informal interviewing days, in which city staff, project partners and volunteers will meet and greet residents and tourists at access points to ask about their experience on the river and where they came from
- Guest books at fishing docks, campgrounds, access points to track dates of use, type of use, and origin of

users

- Crowdsourcing use of river and type of use by asking residents and tourists for pictures over social media
- Online community surveys
- Informational booths at farmers markets to collect and evaluate data about resident use of the river

Even without quantitative data, the JPB understands that making more physically accessible access points on the river, creating a more welcoming experience for people who are new to outdoor recreation, and including families who are not financially able to purchase paddling equipment in community paddle events achieve important community equity objectives. These deliverables may be difficult to measure, but are a high priority for the JPB, as the board is committed to meaningfully increasing use of the Red Lake River and supporting a high-quality experience for all users.

Legacy Pillars:

- Connect People and the Outdoors
- Acquire Land and Create Opportunities
- Take Care of What We Have
- Coordinate Among Providers

Connection to Pillars

Connect People and the Outdoors

The main purpose of this grant and the Red Lake River Corridor Joint Powers Board is to increase recreational use of the river by both residents and tourists. This grant will increase the number of people using the river by making access to the river safer and more continuous, educating residents and children about responsible recreation through paddling and school events, and building facilities that people of all abilities are able to enjoy. Additionally, this grant builds on 2017 GMRPTC-funded projects, including access point improvements and user-friendly, easy-to-understand signage and maps.

While a growing number of tourists are attracted to the Red Lake River Corridor, as evidenced by full-nearly-every-weekend private and public campgrounds and anecdotes from residents who report seeing an increasing number of kayaks floating downstream, the river remains underutilized by residents--especially those without knowledge of river recreation, who do not have access to equipment, and those with ambulatory disabilities. Local leaders in each corridor city report increasing residential interest in outdoor activities for recreation as well as health goals, and the JPBs plan to improve residential access addresses those barriers to residential use to connect people to the outdoors. This project is unique because the river provides a variety recreational activities other trails simply cannot provide due to its length, geological features, and existing locally-supported infrastructure. Even in the winter, residents and tourists enjoy cross country ski trails and snowmobile trails; in the warmer months, fishing, kayaking, canoeing, walking or bicycling on surrounding trails, camping, and visiting one of many parks on the river are possibilities. The natural elements provide an area in which residents and tourists can truly experience it all, and to connect more residents and tourists to the river, the JPB needs to improve/build access points, support meaningful community engagement and outreach and reconsider infrastructures physical accessibility including bathrooms and paved and natural trails.

Acquire Land and Create Opportunities

The Red Lake River winds 175 miles through three counties, crossing through downtowns as well as backyards. Many of the access points included in this funding request are near residential areas, creating convenient opportunities to get out on the river for an afternoon paddle through trees, cliffs, and fields. Still other access points connect the river to a citys downtown-- for example, Crookstons Central Park, which the city is requesting improvements to in this funding request, is adjacent to the citys downtown; coming off the river, it is a 5-minute walk to the public library, movie theater, restaurants, and specialty shops. Because of the rivers length, users can choose what type of experience they would like to have on the river; that versatility appeals to a multitude of populations, again accomplishing the JPBs goal of increasing use of the Red Lake River.

Take Care of What We Have

Many of the projects included in this request, such as trail improvements in St. Hilaire and vehicle barriers in East Grand Forks, are meant to improve what currently exists and block access to vehicles that cause trail erosion. These projects maintain the integrity of the river and the parks and trails located on the river, ensuring a high-quality experience for users no matter which of the rivers 175-miles they choose. Trail improvements in St. Hilaire address natural erosion of dirt trails and prevent further damage from motorized vehicles, while establishing a parking lot to reduce impact on the environment from vehicles. In Thief River Falls, improvements funded by this request upgrade a practically nonexistent path into a newly paved, multi-use trail, next to an assisted living center and nursing home. Many of the other projects in this request, including access points and facilities upgrades, maintain and build upon existing assets to ensure residents and tourists can use them for years to come

Coordinate Among Providers

This funding request consists of several projects, each supported by a local government (or nonprofit for community engagement). Each government as a part of the Joint Powers Board has engaged in considerable collaboration and coordination in order to plan for the region. The JPB collected and prioritized projects, which cities and counties drafted after listening to community input and discussing opportunities for improvements with staff. Rather than each local government applying for funding for their own projects, planning collaboratively enabled the board to request smart investments from the Commission as well as their own citizens.

An example of this smart planning is choosing to strategically place a physically accessible kayak and canoe ramps upstream from other accessible access points and bathrooms. Because of this holistic approach, paddlers who with ambulatory difficulties could choose from a variety of trip types and lengths, and better physical accessibility really benefits all users. For example, families with children would benefit from larger bathrooms and more accessible kayak and canoe ramps, contributing to a more comfortable and safe user experience. Applying together for this grant also enables some of the smaller cities to request higher-quality items than if they were to apply to GMRPTC on their own: smaller cities are unable to contribute a high local match, but applying together, the local match is considered as a whole rather than for each project in each city. The JPB collectively approves projects to submit in the funding request; as an example, for the 2017 funding cycle the city of St. Hilaire was able to submit a request for more expensive ADA-accessible kayak and canoe ramps as a result of applying together. Finally, in addition to coming together to fund improvements, collaboration among JPB members benefits users and improves use of the river by standardizing information and creating a unified corridor identity. The Red Lake River is more than just the part of the river that is in Thief River Falls or Fisher or East Grand Forks, and each of the JPB members understand the interconnectedness of the partners and the role it plays in ensuring a high-quality river experience.

Connection to a Regionally Substantial Component of the Master Plan

The RLRC's Master Plan outlines the goals of corridor improvement and expected outcomes. All projects aim to increase residential and tourist use of the river, including trails that are close to the river. Because the area does not offer many natural lakes or recreation areas with public access, the regional importance of this river cannot be understated. Additionally, the Red Lake River is one of few in Northwest Minnesota that is suitable for canoeing and kayaking,

While the 2017 application focused on access points and river connectivity, this year's grant emphasizes physical accessibility of infrastructure. Two trails projects seek to make trails more accessible: one paved trail in East Grand Forks located next to the Oakland Park nursing home and assisted living center, and one natural trail in St. Hilaire that includes a new parking area and vehicle barriers to maintain the integrity of the trail. The two campsite locations request funding to upgrade out-of-date bath houses. These facilities are ADA-compliant and enable people with ambulatory difficulties to more easily participate in outdoor recreation. Accessibility is important for equity reasons, but also because better trail infrastructure, piers, and bathroom facilities translate for a better user experience for everyone.

Incremental improvements across the river's 175 miles add up over time, and by investing in the Red Lake River Corridor in 2017 and 2018, the Commission is supporting better infrastructure, better accessibility, and a better user experience on one of the region's only water trails. Additionally, each project's regional significance and connectivity are outlined in the 2018 project description packet.

Project Readiness

Project Lead

Crookston City Administrator Shannon Stassen will serve as Project Lead for the RLRC Enhancement Project. Stassen has at his disposal a team of qualified professionals including: Public Works Director/ City Engineer, Parks and Recreation Director, Building Official, Finance Director and Accountant. Stassen has successfully written several grants and managed projects to their completion over the past several years, including MnDOT Alternative Transportation Program Grant, NW Regional Sustainable Development Grant (Green Step Cities initiative implementation), MN Housing Finance Agency CapacityBuilding Grant (Downtown Neighborhood Development) and NWRDC Comprehensive Planning Grant.

Implementation Timeline

Because each city has requested different projects, the projects will be constructed concurrently but completed at different times. All improvements, excluding Red Lake Falls Sportsman Park and Crookstons Central Park, are expected to be complete by summer 2019. Sportsman Park and Central Park are expected to be complete by summer 2020, with construction on Crookstons Central Park commencing in late summer 2019. The Community Paddle events are scheduled for fall 2019 and 2018, and the River of Dreams is scheduled for Spring 2020 and 2021.

Availability for Public Use

Access points and trail improvements funded by GMRPTC in 2017 and requested for 2018 are open to the public during normal park hours at no cost. Currently, the only locations that charge for access are the campgrounds along the river. Camping fees for the two parks in this grant range from \$15 per night to \$30 per night, with weekly discounts. Most parks in the Corridor are open from the early morning to 10:00 at night.

For Sportsman Park, bathroom facilities are currently available to all park patrons and will continue to be open after construction. In Crookston, the facilities in the park are currently only open to paying campers. Under this proposal, Crookston's Central Park bathroom facility will provide public access in addition to keyed access for showers.

The programming that occurs on the river does not limit availability to the public; community paddle events and school events are meant to get more people out on the River, and parks adjacent to the river sometimes host events, but do not substantially limit access to entry points or facilities.

Design Standards

The JPB made physical accessibility of the new access points and facilities a priority. According to 2015 census data, an estimated 6,275 individuals in the tri--county region have a disability. Of these 6,275, almost half have an ambulatory difficulty. The proposed fishing pier in East Grand Forks, Crookstons ADA--compliant dock/access point, and the bath houses in both Red Lake Falls and Crookston meet or exceed the standards of the ADA. Additionally, the physically accessible kayak and canoe ramps feature physically accessible paths to get to the dock, an extra--large dock, a bench, and a sliding seat so that people with ambulatory disabilities can more easily enter their boats and the water. 2017 GMRPTC funded access points also have accessibility benefits, especially St. Hilaires ADA-kayak/canoe ramp and improvements through Crookston.

Crookstons Central Park

Widseth, Smith and Nolting has provided design work and cost estimates for Crookston projects. This engineering firm is highly qualified and is familiar with all ADA and Minnesota regulations.

About WSN, from their website: Widseth Smith Nolting is an engineering, architecture, land surveying and environmental services firm with eight offices in Minnesota and North Dakota and 190 employees. We design roads, bridges, water and wastewater systems, and buildings of all types. Our engineering practice includes civil, structural, mechanical and electrical engineers who work on a wide range of projects for public and private clients from large-scale public works improvements to facility and site design for individual companies. Our land survey crews and environmental specialists work throughout the Midwest. Our architectural portfolio includes schools, clinics, senior living, retail, offices, factories, historic buildings and more. Together, this multi-discipline team provides our clients a complete package of services to lead their project from concept to completion. WSN was established in 1975.

Red Lake Falls Sportsman Park

Bolton & Menk, who facilitated the Sportsman Park design process for Red Lake Falls, has extensive experience working all over the midwest. From their work, Bolton & Menk are well-equipped to draft plans complying with ADA guidelines and Minnesota design standards.

About Bolton & Menk, from their website: Bolton & Menk, Inc. is ranked #161 among the Top 500 Engineering Surveying Firms in the United States by Engineering News-Record. Bolton & Menks reputation, together with expanding expertise and depth of experience, has enabled us to maintain long-lasting relationships with our clients and expand our market share throughout the Upper Midwest. With 16 offices and more than 450 employees, Bolton & Menk provides public infrastructure solutions to communities large and small.

Project Cost Breakdown

Project Total GMRPTC Local match

Greenway Parks - EGF \$12,000 \$9,000 \$3,000
 La Fave Park - EGF \$32,000 \$24,000 \$8,500
 Folsom Park - EGF \$33,500 \$25,125 \$8,375
 Central Park - CRK \$1,.465m \$1,0365m \$428,500
 Island Park - STH \$5500 \$3,750 \$1,750
 Sportsman Park - RLF \$400,000 \$300,000 \$100,000
 Oakland Park - TRF \$132,417 \$99,313 \$33,104
 River of Dreams \$142,196 \$106,647 \$35,549
 Paddle Events \$82,656 \$61,992 \$20,664
 TOTAL \$2,305,269 \$1,666,327 \$638,942

Funding Request Breakdown

Grant Funding Request

\$1,666,327

Local Match #1

\$19,375

Funder #1

0

Local Match #2

\$428,500

Funder #2

0

Local Match #3

\$101,750

Funder #3

0

Local Match #4

\$33,104

Funder #4

0

Local Match #5

\$56,213

Funder #5

0

Non-Eligible Local Match

75000

Non-Eligible Item Description

Administrative services provided by all cities and overall grant management provided by City of Crookston, valued nominally at 3% of the funding request. Clearly, the value of these services is much greater. Leadership from the member of the 6 cities, 3 counties and watershed district that comprise the Joint Power Board as well as the partners from tourism, chambers of commerce and interested community members that work together in planning and implementation. This is represented as \$25,000.

Total Funding

\$2,305,269

Percentage of local match

0.28

Completion Timeframe

24 months

Funder #1

City of Crookston, East Grand Forks, Thief River Falls

Funder #1 Resolutions

Resolutions CRO EGF TRF

[http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/funding/18-026F/Resolutions_EGF Crookston TRF_a6f8c0.pdf](http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/funding/18-026F/Resolutions_EGF_Crookston_TRF_a6f8c0.pdf)

Funder #2

St Hilaire, Red Lake Falls

Funder #2 Resolutions

Resolutions SH RLF

[http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/funding/18-026F/Resolutions SH and RLF_df5c4d.pdf](http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/funding/18-026F/Resolutions_SH_and_RLF_df5c4d.pdf)

Funder #3

International Water Institute

Funder #3 Resolutions

LOC International Water Institute

[http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/funding/18-026F/IWI Letter of committment to RLRC 2018 \(1\)_044ccd.pdf](http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/funding/18-026F/IWI_Letter_of_commitment_to_RLRC_2018(1)_044ccd.pdf)

Funder #4

Red Lake Falls (resolution compined above)

Funder #5

Thief River Falls (resolution combined above)

Budget Worksheet

[http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/funding/18-026F/RLRC Projects Budget, Sept 18](http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/funding/18-026F/RLRC_Projects_Budget_Sept_18)

Attachments

Doc Name	Description	Url
Project Area Map	RLRC Project Maps	http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/funding/18-026F/2018_RLRC_Project_Map_b88ee4.pdf
Additional Attachment		http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/funding/18-026F/RLRC_Project_Packet_20180918_submitted_6f9e3a.pdf
Funder Resolution One	Resolutions CRO EGF TRF	http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/funding/18-026F/Resolutions_EGF_Crookston_TRF_a6f8c0.pdf
Funder Resolution Two	Resolutions SH RLF	http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/funding/18-026F/Resolutions_SH_and_RLF_df5c4d.pdf
Funder Resolution Three	LOC International Water Institute	http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/funding/18-026F/IWI_Letter_of_commitment_to_RLRC_2018(1)_044ccd.pdf
Budget Worksheet		http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/funding/18-026F/RLRC_Projects_Budget_Sept_18_revision_cc3b76.xlsx