

Agency Purpose

The Legislative Commission on Minnesota Resources (LCMR) was created in 1963 to provide the legislature with the background necessary to evaluate programs proposed to preserve, develop, and maintain Minnesota's natural resources.

M.S. 116P and an adopted strategic plan guide LCMR expenditure recommendations from the LCMR to the Minnesota Legislature for natural resource projects.

Recommendations are from four funding sources, the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund, LAWCON Receipts, Oil Overcharge money and the Great Lakes Protection Account. Funding recommendations are for new, innovative, or accelerated natural resource projects designed to help sustain, enhance, and utilize Minnesota's natural resources.

Core Functions

Strategic Plan: Every two years, the Commission adopts a comprehensive strategic plan and issues a request for proposal (RFP) that is open to everyone. The RFP was adopted in December 2003.

Review Process: For the two-year funding beginning 7-1-05, 221 proposals for over \$240 million were received. The Commission evaluated them based on the criteria and priority funding strategies set forth in the RFP. In addition, the Citizens Advisory Committee advised the Commission regarding allocations from the Environment and Natural Resource Trust Fund.

After an initial review of all proposals, the Commission selected 93 proposals that best fit the priority funding strategies and criteria. The project managers for the selected proposals were invited to present their proposals before Commission members at a series of public hearings during eight days in June 2004.

Recommendations: For the biennium beginning 7-1-05, the Commission will recommend to the 2005 Legislature funding for 94 projects totaling \$39.3 million.

Operations

The LCMR is comprised of 20 members consisting of the chairs of the house and senate committees on environment and natural resources (or designees appointed for the terms of the chairs), the chairs of the house and senate committees on environment and natural resources finance (or designees appointed for the terms of the chairs), the chairs of the house Ways and Means and senate Finance Committees (or designees appointed for the terms of the chairs), seven members of the senate appointed by the Subcommittee on Committees of the Committee on Rules and Administration and seven members of the house appointed by the Speaker. At least three members from the senate and three members from the house must be from the minority caucus. The members elect their officers, rotating the chair from the senate to the house every two years. The LCMR employs a full-time professional and support staff of four full-time employees. In 2004-05 there also was an allocation of \$150,000 to the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to administer the contracts of all pass through non-state agency appropriations.

The Commission uses a number of approaches to assess the status of the state's natural resources and identify important issues and needs. These approaches include: site visits to public and private sector natural resource projects, regional forums at which citizens advise Commission members of their concerns regarding natural resources, and a web survey soliciting input from citizens. In addition to these activities, the Commission is advised by a Citizens Advisory Committee (appointed by the governor) regarding priorities for expenditures from the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund.

Additionally, all proposed research projects selected for funding recommendations undergo a scientific peer review. The Commission oversees and evaluates project progress and completion through work program review.

FY 2004-2005 Budget	
Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund	\$37,658,000
LAWCON Receipts per 116P.14	\$ 1,600,000
Great Lakes Protection Account	\$ 28,000
TOTAL for FY 2004-05	\$39,286,500

All appropriation for funded projects are made through state agencies; for both direct agency spending and agreements with others (nonprofits, local government, etc.)

Contact

FY 2006-07 Project Funding Recommendations, the 2005 RFP and abstracts of funded projects since 1991 are available on the LCMR web site.

<http://www.lcmr.leg.mn>

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