



The following resolution was passed by unanimous vote by member counties of the Northern Counties Land Use Coordinating Board at its regular meeting September 6, 2012.

**Greater Minnesota Regional Park and Trail Coalition Funding Request**

WHEREAS, the Minnesota State Parks and Trails Legacy Plan calls for a statewide system of parks and trails; and

WHEREAS, Greater Minnesota Regional Parks and Trails have been underfunded for decades when compared to investments in the metro park system over that same time period; and

WHEREAS, the first round of park and trail legacy funding in 2009 was unfair to Greater Minnesota, with 43% of the funding dedicated to metro park needs, 43% dedicated to MN Department of Natural Resources (DNR) park and trail needs and projects, while leaving only 14% funding for a statewide grants program which included Metro Parks. Of that 14%, 20% of those funds were given to the Metro Park Area; and

WHEREAS, the second round of park and trail legacy funding in 2011 produced better but still lopsided results, with Greater Minnesota receiving 20% in dedicated legacy funding, while metro parks received 43% and DNR received 37%; and

WHEREAS, a 2011 inventory of Greater Minnesota parks and trail needs resulted in \$76 million in projects, and over \$33 million in grant requests – or more than four times the amount of the 2011 legacy grants awarded to Greater Minnesota; and

WHEREAS, rural Minnesotans are significant contributors to the sales taxes collected in the metro area and this calculation is not included in any of the current parks and trails funding formula factors and should be added; and

Member Counties:

- Aitkin County
- Cook County
- Koochiching County
- Lake County
- Lake of the Woods
- Pennington County
- Roseau County
- St. Louis County

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WHEREAS, the State of Minnesota is the third largest landowner in the U.S., and over 95% of state owned lands exist in Greater Minnesota, resulting in significant lost and permanently sacrificed tax base. Furthermore, this lost tax base also includes lost sales taxes – additional sales tax revenues that Greater Minnesota counties could be contributing to the Legacy Fund:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Northern Counties Land Use Coordinating Board believes that Greater Minnesota should receive adequate funding to carry out the State Parks and Trails Legacy Plan and the public sentiment for high quality projects.

RESOLVED FURTHER, that the Northern Counties Land Use Coordinating Board believes the current Parks and Trail Legacy splits of 43% metro, 37% DNR and 20% to Greater Minnesota are inherently unfair to Greater Minnesota and not enough to carry out the state plan or meet public expectations.

RESOLVED FURTHER, that the Northern Counties Land Use Coordinating Board believes the legacy funding splits at 43% metro, 37% DNR and 20% for the remaining 80 non-metro counties is not fair and will not provide the funding to allow Greater Minnesota to succeed in carrying out expectations of either the public or the state plan.

RESOLVED FURTHER, that the Northern Counties Land Use Coordinating Board believes the Greater Minnesota percentage of Legacy funding should increase to a level more equal to that of the metro area and DNR and that this level should be at a minimum 20% of the Parks and Trail Legacy funding.