



Request for Proposals

Forest Management Plan: City of Duluth

5-21-2025

Proposals must be delivered no later than 4:00 pm CST on Wednesday, June 11, 2025.

1. Statement of Need

The Minnesota Land Trust (MLT) is seeking services from a qualified forester to complete a Forest Management Plan and treatment specifications for targeted forested natural areas in the City of Duluth, MN (Figures 1-3).

2. Background

The City of Duluth owns and manages more than 6,000 acres of forested land within the city limits. Much of these forests have been unmanaged for at least the past 50 years. These forests contribute to multiple important uses, including providing habitat for wildlife, stormwater attenuation, and outdoor recreation for Duluth citizens.

The MLT is assisting the City of Duluth with developing and completing projects to restore forested avian habitat associated with the St. Louis River estuary.

3. Scope of Services

The services requested in this solicitation will result in a Forest Management Plan for three Target Areas, Northeast, Central, and Southwest (Figures 1-3), within the City of Duluth.

The Forester shall provide the following services:

1. Delineation and mapping of management units (stands) accounting for:
 - a. Overstory species
 - b. Recreational uses
 - c. Wildlife corridors
 - d. Soils and topography
2. Description of current forest conditions
3. Preparation of treatment prescriptions with strategies and timeline. Prescriptions may include:
 - a. Silvicultural prescriptions (excluding clear-cutting)
 - b. Restoration/enhancement planting & seeding
 - c. Invasive species removal & control
 - d. Prescribed fire
4. Recommendation of long-term management goals for each Target Area

The Forester shall attend the following meetings with MLT and the City of Duluth:

- Project kickoff meeting to discuss management objectives for each Target Area
- A meeting to discuss the draft management plan for each target area (three in total)

The following information is available for the project:

- Project area maps
- Native Plant Community data
- Imagine 2035: Comprehensive Land Use Plan Update (2018)
- Hawk Ridge Mini-Master Plan
- Duluth Traverse Mini-Master Plan
- Cross-County Ski Trail Master Plan
- Natural Resources Management Program Plan

4. Deliverables

The Forester shall prepare a single summary report, the Forest Management Plan, with the following sections organized by Target Area:

Stand level Maps of each Target Area. The Forester shall use best professional judgement to delineate stands based on factors including tree species, stand age, soils, or other significant features, and/or recreational/special uses. Minimum stand size will be 5 acres. A minimum of five sampling plots per stand is required with plots evenly distributed throughout the stand. The Forester shall provide stand polygons in ArcGIS compatible format.

Stand Descriptions. The Forester shall describe the existing condition of each stand which will at a minimum include: tree species present, insect/disease or off-site growing issues, dominant understory shrub species and percent cover, and invasive species if present. The stand description shall also include the trajectory of where the condition of each stand is likely headed in the next 10-20 years without treatment. An opinion on fuel loads present and severity is also needed.

A summary database of stand descriptions is required. The database must at a minimum include: stand ID, number of sampling plots, native plant community, regeneration figures (<5" DBH) per acre by species and size (<6' tall, >6' tall), volume/acre by tree species, estimated average diameter for overstory species, basal area by species (stems >5" DBH), standard error (%) of basal area, estimated stand age, and site index for dominant species shall be included.

Treatment Recommendations. The Forester shall prepare a recommended prescription for each stand. The prescription should include activities such as selective harvest, invasive species removal, planting, girdling, scarification, mulching, seeding and prescribed burning. Keep in mind that harvesting that has a visual impact is difficult to secure public buy-in and contractors (loggers) are not particularly interested in work within City limits. The Forester may group adjacent stands into larger management units when they share treatment type and schedule.

A summary database of treatments for all stands is required. The database must at a minimum include: stand ID, acres, treatment action, treatment year or treatment

trigger, estimated cost/yield per acre, desired future conditions, and current stand type.

The Forester shall consider the City's objectives for each Target Area, the municipal setting, and reasonable budgets in recommending treatment options. Clearcutting of any sort is unallowable, as is excessively dense seedling planting. Practices that foster or enhance natural recruitment are preferred. Enhancing individual native plant community components as a climate forward strategy is desired.

Long Term (25-year) Management Goals. The Forester shall recommend long-term management goals for each Target Area based on current stand conditions and potential for the native plant community.

The following deliverables are required:

- Draft forest management plan (MS Word format)
- Final forest management plan (MD Word format)
- GIS file of stand polygons (geodatabase or shapefile)
- Database of stand prescriptions (MS Excel format)

4. Schedule

The proposed project schedule shall include the following dates:

- Kickoff meeting within 10 days of final contract
- Preliminary management plan for each Target Area completed in the following order:
 - Northeast (Figure 1)
 - Southwest (Figure 3)
 - Central (Figure 2)
- Meeting with MLT and City to discuss the preliminary management plan for each Target Area
- Draft plan for all three Target Areas
- Final plan for all three Target Areas

Contracting is anticipated to be completed within two weeks of proposal submission. Proposals must include a proposed project schedule indicating meetings and deliverables.

5. Submission of Proposals

Bids should be concise and include the following submittals:

- Proposed project team and qualifications
- Example Forest Management Plan (with names and identifying information redacted) prepared by the Forester that best demonstrates the experience criteria listed below
- Two references

- Proposed project schedule
- Cost proposal identifying time and materials to complete the Scope of Work

Bids should include sufficient information regarding the Forester's ability to perform the services sought to enable MLT to make a judgment about the Forester's ability to perform the work identified in the Scope of Services. The contract will be reimbursable on a time and materials basis with a maximum amount based on the selected consultant's cost proposal.

Consultants interested in providing these services should submit a proposal to:
Minnesota Land Trust 394 Lake Ave. S. Suite 404A Duluth, MN. 55802. Attn: Gini Breidenbach. Proposals may be submitted by email in PDF format to gbreidenbach@mnland.org.

Any proposal received or postmarked after the deadline will not be considered. If no suitable proposals are received another solicitation may be advertised. Any questions can be directed to Gini Breidenbach at 218.221.7033.

6. Evaluation Criteria

The Minnesota Land Trust reserves the right to reject any or all Bids and reserves the right to issue a subsequent Request for Proposals or cancel the entire Request for Proposals process. Minnesota Land Trust reserves the right to contact any Respondent for clarification after responses are opened and/or to further negotiate with any Respondent if such clarification is deemed desirable by Minnesota Land Trust. The Minnesota Land Trust reserves the right to evaluate the responses submitted, to waive any informalities and irregularities therein, to select candidates for interview, or to reject any or all submittals should it be deemed in the Source of Funds, or Minnesota Land Trust's best interest. Minnesota Land Trust reserves the right to negotiate with any, all, or none of the Respondents.

Bids will be evaluated on a best value basis. Bids will be reviewed by the Minnesota Land Trust. The MLT will consider the information provided in the proposal when making its decision and may consider relevant information from other sources. The MLT in its sole discretion will award the work to the Forester submitting the best proposal. Criteria for determining the best proposal includes:

Minimum Criteria:

- 1) Qualifications – The Forester must be either an SAF Certified Forester or a registered Forest Stewardship Plan writer in Minnesota.
- 2) Expertise – The Forester must be able to utilize Minnesota's Native Plant Communities classification system and have localized expertise in northeast Minnesota or the Great Lakes environment.
- 3) Capacity – The business must have the capacity to conduct this work on a cost-reimbursable basis, have the staff and access to equipment to complete the work within the required timeframe, and to meet the administrative requirements

associated with State and Federal funding, including carrying professional liability insurance.

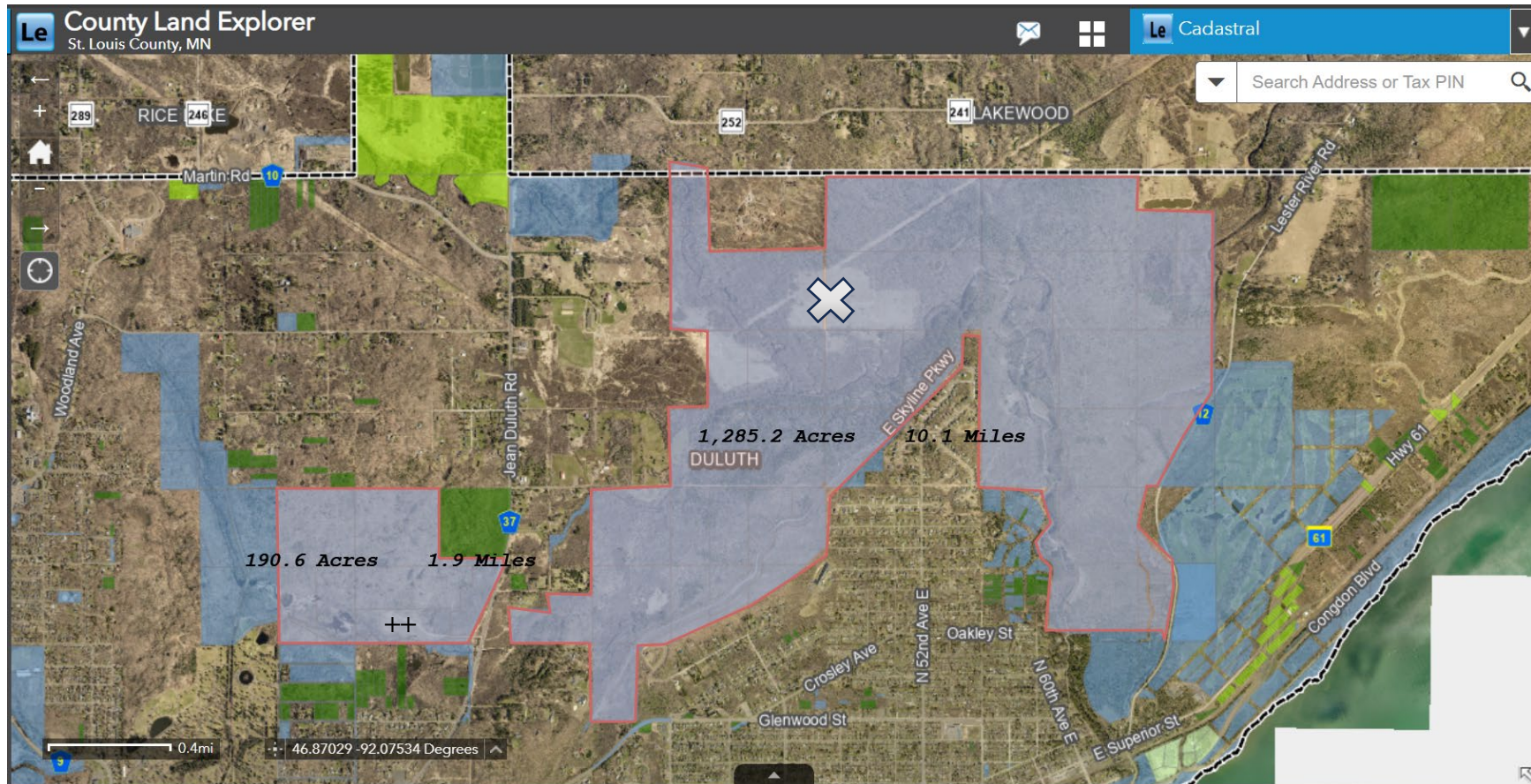
Bid Ranking Criteria:

- 1) Experience (25%) – The proposed project staff should demonstrate experience preparing ecologically-based sustainable forest management plans including invasive species control, habitat enhancement, and prescribed burning. Experience with avian species habitat restoration design is a plus.
- 2) Schedule (25%) – Bids will be prioritized by completion date. The earliest reasonable completion schedule is preferred.
- 3) Cost (50%) - Overall cost estimate and cost rates will be considered. The proposed budget should reflect a realistic work effort to complete the work products.

7. Source of Funds

Funding for this project is provided by the State of Minnesota through the Outdoor Heritage Fund as recommended by the Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council (LSOHC) under a grant for “DNR St. Louis River Restoration Initiative Ph. 9” (ML 2022, Ch. 77, Art. 1, Sec. 2, subd. 5(q)). These funds are subject to the requirements of the DNR Reimbursement Manual (<http://dnr.state.mn.us/grants/passthrough>) and the accomplishment plan of the Outdoor Heritage Fund grant (https://www.lsohc.mn.gov/FY2023/Accomp_Plans/5q.pdf). Submittal of a proposal in response to this solicitation indicates the Forester’s willingness and ability to comply with these and all other relevant state and federal laws and regulations in fulfillment of its work for this project.

Figure 1: Northeast - Lester-Amity-Hawk Ridge



Notes:


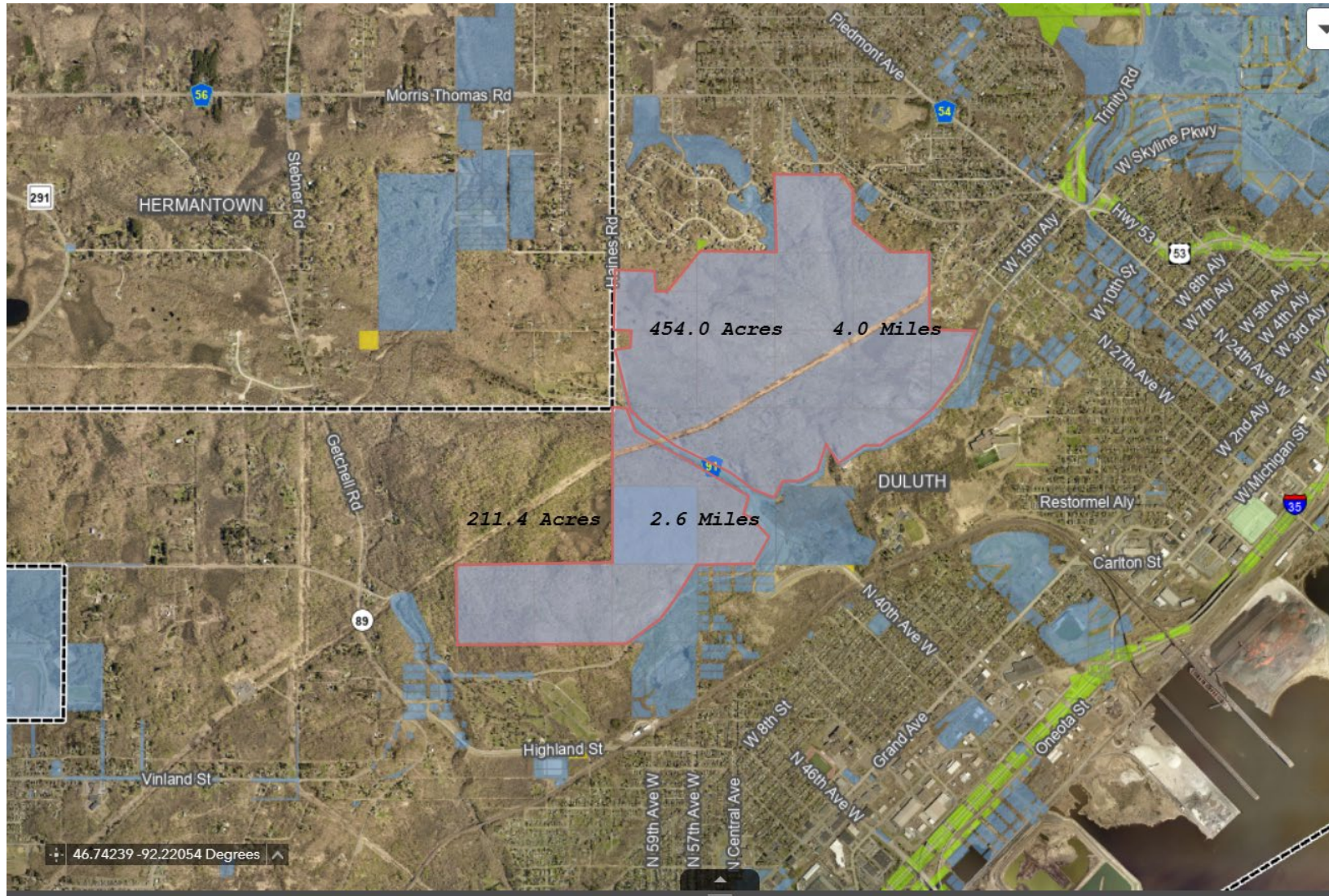
- ~2,500 acres in size (see pink boundaries)
- Two areas separated by Jean Duluth Road
- Area of highest fuel loads on City-owned land - from 2016 blowdown and spruce budworm impacts.
-  is a hayfield planned for solar. No evaluation needed.
- "++" is gravel pit. No evaluation needed.

Figure 2: Central - Piedmont/Brewer



Notes:

- ~670 acres in size (see pink boundaries)
- Two areas separated by 40th Avenue West
- High density of recreational uses/Trails. Piedmont Rec Area.
- Surrounding area highly urban.

Figure 3: Southwest - Mission Creek



Notes:

- ~2,000 acres in size (see pink boundary)
- More remote than other areas.
- Location and condition of Ash stands of great interest here.