
Name of Organization: Inland Sea Society

Type of Organization: Other

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Project Title: Sioux / Onion River Watershed Initiative

Project Category: Habitat (Ecological) Protection and Rest

Rank by Organization (if applicable): 0

Total Funding Requested (\$): 47,025 **Project Duration:** 1 Years

Abstract:

The Lake Superior basin is without a replicable model for citizen based integrated watershed management. We will plan and implement a watershed council within the Sioux and Onion River watersheds that will facilitate participation in the protection and restoration of the watersheds and the coastal wetland complex at their confluence with Lake Superior. Linking town and county land use plans, state management with national and county forest management will provide the base from which to leverage private land stewardship. Without the potential created by this initiative significant opportunities will be lost to protect critical habitats to the Lake Superior ecosystem.

Geographic Areas Affected by the Project

States:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Illinois | <input type="checkbox"/> New York |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Indiana | <input type="checkbox"/> Pennsylvania |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Michigan | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Wisconsin |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Minnesota | <input type="checkbox"/> Ohio |

Lakes:

- | | |
|--|------------------------------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Superior | <input type="checkbox"/> Erie |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Huron | <input type="checkbox"/> Ontario |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Michigan | <input type="checkbox"/> All Lakes |

Geographic Initiatives:

- | | | | | |
|--|----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Greater Chicago | <input type="checkbox"/> NE Ohio | <input type="checkbox"/> NW Indiana | <input type="checkbox"/> SE Michigan | <input type="checkbox"/> Lake St. Clair |
|--|----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---|

Primary Affected Area of Concern:

Other Affected Areas of Concern:

For Habitat Projects Only:

Primary Affected Biodiversity Investment Area: Bad River Watershed/Bayfield Peninsula

Other Affected Biodiversity Investment Areas:

Problem Statement:

The Sioux River enters Lake Superior through extensive wetlands. The area has a beach and sandstone cliffs that support unique plants. A wetland estuary featuring a shoreline bog connects with that of the Onion River to the north forming a complex that the Lake Superior Binational Program has identified as important to the integrity of the Lake Superior ecosystem for coastal wetlands, rare communities, vital functions for planning objectives and fish and wildlife spawning and nursery grounds. The Lake Superior Coastal Wetland Evaluation (Epstein 1997) conducted by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources identified the site as an aquatic priority site. It describes the fauna as diverse, with 35 taxa present, four of which are rare. Threats to the coastal wetland include the spread of giant reed grass and purple loosestrife, sedimentation, disruption of hydrology and water chemistry, over use by recreationists, and maintenance of activities on Highway 13.

The entire Sioux and Onion Rivers are considered outstanding resource waters by Wisconsin State Statutes and combine to be one of the largest watersheds on the Bayfield Peninsula. Problems of nonpoint sources of pollution in the form of sand and silt result from both natural and land use activities. Forest management on public and private land and road maintenance are two areas of concern. Private landowners are without the means of cooperative management that will provide incentive to consider cumulative impacts. The townships of Bayview, Washburn and Barksdale are concluding land use planning and Bayfield County is beginning a comprehensive land use plan. There currently exists no means to link these plans for the natural resource priorities identified in landowner surveys, existing resource plans of the Sioux River Fishery Area, Chequamegon - Nicolet National Forest and Bayfield County Forest. Additionally the US EPA Lake Superior Comparative Watershed Study including the Sioux River system is about to be published and is in need of implementation strategies.

Proposed Work Outcome:

We will hire a qualified resource manager with the technical and organizational skills to begin the process of gathering pertinent documents and data to educate stakeholders regarding the benefits of cooperating on all issues concerning the Sioux and Onion River watersheds. Through individual and public meetings, distribution of geographical information data and systems models, environmental education outreach activities and water quality monitoring the formation of a council will evolve. The direct outcome will be awareness of the need for protection and restoration and the means by which to make it happen. Integrated plans and data from ongoing water quality monitoring will be the measure of success.

Project Milestones:	Dates:
Project Start	09/2000
Hire project manager, compile data	10/2000
Direct mailing and Public meeting	10/2000
Develop study design for monitoring	11/2000
Educational outreach strategy	12/2000
Monitoring and watershed tours	04/2001
Council formed, watershed plan	06/2001
Project End	09/2001

Project Addresses Environmental Justice

If So, Description of How:

Project Addresses Education/Outreach

If So, Description of How:

The education outreach strategy will include development of a geographical information system and a study design for long term water quality monitoring. Distribution of all educational materials and data will be distributed through direct mailings, public meetings and the Inland Sea Society web site (www.inlandsea.org). Youth of all ages from the Washburn School District, Penokee Mountain Cooperative School and the Bayfield County 4H and Youth Program will have the opportunity to participate in field trips, monitoring and restoration activities. The maps, models and fact sheets developed will be made available to the public through diverse outreach efforts. The primary emphasis and message will be the promotion of stewardship and volunteer opportunities.

Project Budget:

	Federal Share Requested (\$)	Applicant's Share (\$)
Personnel:	25,000	0
Fringe:	6,250	0
Travel:	500	0
Equipment:	3,000	10,000
Supplies:	1,000	1,000
Contracts:	5,000	0
Construction:	0	0
Other:	2,000	3,000
Total Direct Costs:	42,750	14,000
Indirect Costs:	4,275	0
Total:	47,025	14,000
Projected Income:	0	0

Funding by Other Organizations (Names, Amounts, Description of Commitments):

Funding support will be solicited from private donations, town governments, private foundations and grant opportunities. The goal will be to have sustained funding provided beyond the first year to support ongoing council, monitoring and educational activities.

Description of Collaboration/Community Based Support:

Bayview Township
Washburn Township
Barksdale Township
Bayfield County Forestry Department
Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources
US Fish and Wildlife Service
USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service
Green Onion Resource Center
Allaince for Sustainability
Bayfield Regional Conservancy
Bayfield County Land Conservation Department
University of Wisconsin Cooperative Extension
Sigurd Olson Environmental Institute of Northland College
Highway 13 National Scenic Highway Committee
Chequamegon Area Mountain Bike Association
Bayfield County Snowmobile Allaince
Chequamegon Audobon
US Forest Service - Chequamegon - Nicolet National Forest - Washburn Ranger District
Bayfield County 4H and Youth Program
Penokee Mountain Cooperative School
Washburn School District
Lake Superior Binational Forum
Lake Superior Alliance
Red Cliff Band of Lake Superior Chippewa
Great Lakes Indian Fish and Wildlife Commission
The Nature Conservancy