



Special Board of Directors Meeting

Tuesday, March 18, 2025 4:30 p.m.



AGENDA

		<u>Time</u>	<u>Page</u>	<u>Action</u>
1.	Call to Order	4:30		
2.	Roll Call – Secretary Branstad			
3.	Approval of Agenda			Action
4.	Approval of Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources (LCCMR) Resolution 2025-01 – Samuel Sharp, Lisa Callahan, Andrew Austreng - Aspect Consulting	4:35	3	Action
5.	Adjournment	5:00		Action

Rob Wilkening will be joining remotely from 3361 371st Ave. Cambridge, MN
Marie Dranttel will be joining remotely from 117 S 3rd St. Saint Peter, MN
Christian Lilienthal will be joining remotely from 1216 2nd Street SW Rochester, MN

Memo

To: RNDC Board of Directors

From: Chair Mike Laven

Date: March 11, 2025

Re: Partnership Opportunity with Geosyntec for 2026 LCCMR Grant —
Advancing Ground Source Energy Solutions

RDNC is in a position to pursue an attractive grant opportunity available from the Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources (LCCMR). The LCCMR manages the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund for the purpose of advancing protection, enhancement, and appropriate use of State resources. The 2026 Funding Opportunity was recently released and includes Energy as a new project category available for funding. Energy development, planning, and efficiency is an important planning consideration that spans all sectors within RDNC's jurisdiction, including new construction/development, facility retrofits, and conservation measures. Recent policy and technical momentum on the development of ground sourced energy systems is of interest to RDNC, as it provides an opportunity for it to assist all sectors within its jurisdiction in pursuing economic and sustainable alternatives.

RDNC was approached by Geosyntec Consultants, Inc. (Geosyntec), a planning and engineering firm with expertise in supporting development of groundwater and energy resources in Minnesota, to partner in the 2026 LCCMR grant opportunity. This firm does not implement or advocate for a particular technology but instead works with public and private entities (e.g., energy districts construction firms, district, city and county, facilities, etc.) to identify and pursue opportunities for resource development. Geosyntec is proposing to lead a ground source energy evaluation project, funded through the 2026 LCCMR grant opportunity, on behalf of and in partnership with RDNC to benefit those within and outside RDNC's jurisdiction. In addition to public and private developers, school districts, health care, higher education, and city and county facilities would greatly benefit from having access to planning tools for development of ground source energy, and specifically ground source heat pump systems.

Why Now?

Jeff Standish, who currently works at Geosyntec and previously at the University of Minnesota, believes that RNDC would be a great partner for this project. Jeff attended a delegation with RNDC's executive director and Evergreen Energy. Networking took some time, and the idea of partnering with Region Nine emerged just in the past couple of weeks, like many grant opportunities. This timing of partnership development and the initial grant application deadline of March 19 requires a timely decision by the board.

Why Region Nine?

- **Economic growth/enhance efficiency:** The development of Ground Source Heat Pump (GSHP) systems can attract investment and create jobs in rural areas. This can lead to increased economic activity and improved local infrastructure, benefiting the community as a whole. GSHP systems provide a reliable and efficient source of heating and cooling, reducing the strain on traditional energy grids. Strain is only going to continue with MN's push to develop 6 new data centers.
- **Increase resiliency:** Energy projects like GSHP systems contribute to infrastructure resilience by ensuring a consistent energy supply during extreme weather events. This helps protect essential services and facilities, such as hospitals, emergency shelters, and other public facilities.
- **Capitalize on recent legislation changes:** The recent legislation in Minnesota aims to advance geothermal energy projects by addressing previous constraints on water flow rates. Previously, geothermal projects were limited to a flow rate of 20-50 gallons per minute (GPM), which restricted their scalability and efficiency. The new legislation removes these constraints, allowing for more robust and efficient geothermal systems to be developed.
- **Increase collaboration:** Improve planning and development of geothermal energy development, fosters collaboration between local governments, developers, and other stakeholders. This can lead to more coordinated efforts in achieving clean energy goals and addressing community needs.



RESOLUTION

Region Nine Development Commission

2025 – 01

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING APPROVAL OF LEGISLATIVE-CITIZEN COMMISSION ON MINNESOTA RESOURCES 2026 ENRTF REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

WHEREAS, The Region Nine Development Commission seeks \$400,000.00 to develop a regional web-based tool designed to evaluate ground source energy site locations through extensive data collection and analysis. This evaluation tool will provide critical insights into potential project considerations, ensuring more resilient and adaptive energy solutions in response to Minnesota’s volatile weather and climate patterns. By enabling informed decision-making, the tool will help mitigate financial risks, enhance long-term project security, and drive cost savings by optimizing site selection, reducing inefficiencies, and improving overall system performance.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the Region Nine Development Commission supports the above referenced project and authorizes the submittal of a proposal for funding of this project on behalf of the Region Nine Development Commission to the Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources (LCCMR) in response to the 2026 Environmental and Natural Resources Trust Fund (ENRTF) Request for Proposal; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That, if funding is awarded, the Region Nine Development Commission agrees to accept the award and may enter into an agreement with the state of Minnesota for the above referenced project. The Region Nine Development Commission will comply with all applicable laws, environmental requirements, and regulations and any additional conditions stated in the grant agreement and the approved LCCMR work plan; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That Region Nine Development Commission understands that grants from the ENRTF are generally paid out on a reimbursement basis. The Region Nine Development Commission has the financial capability to pay for project expenses prior to seeking reimbursement; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That Region Nine Development Commission certifies none of the current principals of Region Nine Development Commission have been

convicted of a felony financial crime in the last ten years. For this purpose, a principal is defined as a public official, a board member, or staff that would have the authority to access or determine the use of ENRTF funds, if awarded; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That Jessica Beyer, Deputy Director is hereby authorized to execute such agreements and work plans as necessary and Samuel Sharp is authorized to implement the project on behalf of the Region Nine Development Commission.

Now, therefore, be it resolved that Region Nine Development Commission hereby approves and authorizes the Region Nine Development Commission's proposal to the Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources 2026 ENRTF Request For Proposal.

Dated this 18th of March 2025

Signed:

Mike Laven, Chair

Jim Branstad, Secretary

Terms & Abbreviations

ACC – American Connection Corp	MAPO – Mankato/North Mankato Area Planning Organization
APPR – Annual Performance Progress Report (CEDS)	MCLA – Minnesota Council on Latino Affairs
ATP – Area Transportation Partnership	MDH – Minnesota Department of Health
AURI – Agricultural Utilization Research Institute	MPCA – Minnesota Pollution Control Agency
BDO – Bioeconomy Development Opportunity	MSA – Metropolitan Statistical Area
CRP – Carbon Reduction Program	MSU-M – Minnesota State University, Mankato
CEDS – Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy	MYLAP – MN Young American Leaders Program
COPAL – Comunidades Organizando el Poder y la Acción Latina (Communities Organizing Latino Power and Action)	NEA – National Endowment for the Arts
CGMC – Coalition of Greater Minnesota Cities	NEH – National Endowment for the Humanities
CPRG – Climate Pollution Reduction Grant	NUBRIC – New Ulm Business Resource Innovation Center
CSET – College of Science, Engineering & Technology	NRCS – Natural Resources Conservation Services
CSM – Climate Smart Municipalities	PI - Prosperity Initiative
CSSJ – Climate Smart St. James	PROTECT – Promoting Resilient Operations for Transformative, Efficient, and Cost-saving Transportation
CTS – Center for Transportation Studies	REDA – Regional Economic Development Alliance
DEED – Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development	REV – Rural Entrepreneurial Venture
DOE – Department of Energy	RLF – Revolving Loan Fund
EDA – Economic Development Administration	RNAI – Region Nine Area Inc.
EDD – Economic Development District	RNDC – Region Nine Development Commission
EECBG - Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant	SACE – Southern Agricultural Center for Excellence
GAC – Gustavus Adolphus College	SAF – Sustainable Aviation Fuel
GIS – Geographic Information Systems	SBDC – Small Business Development Center
GMG – Greater Mankato Growth	SCC – South Central College
GMNP – Greater Minnesota Partnership	SCSC – South Central Service Cooperative
HACER – Hispanic Advocacy and Community Empowerment through Research	SHIP – Statewide Health Improvement Partnership
IF – Initiative Foundation	SMIF – Southern Minnesota Initiative Foundation
LGU – Local Government Unit	SRTS – Safe Routes to Schools
LMI – Labor Market Information	SS4A – Safe Streets for All
LMI – Low-to-Moderate Income	STIP – State Transportation Improvement Program
MADO – Minnesota Association of Development Organizations	TAC – Transportation Advisory Committee
MAPCED - Minnesota Association of Professional County Economic Developers	WCI – West-Central Initiative
	TZD – Toward Zero Deaths