



Legislation Text

File #: 18-0693R, **Version:** 1

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE CITY TO ENTER INTO A JOINT POWERS AGREEMENT WITH THE STATE OF MINNESOTA, DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES, FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE NOT TO EXCEED \$5,000 FOR THE COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF MUD LAKE.

CITY PROPOSAL:

RESOLVED, that the proper city officials are hereby authorized to enter into a joint powers agreement, substantially the same as the attached Exhibit A, with the state of Minnesota, department of natural resources (MN DNR) to provide financial assistance for the comparative analysis of Mud Lake.

FURTHER RESOLVED, that the proper city officials are authorized to accept reimbursement monies from the state of Minnesota for costs incurred by the city for the analysis, in an amount not to exceed \$5,000 to be deposited into Fund 452-030-4220-07-HANDHTAX-1501-03 (Tourism & Recreational Projects, Finance, State of MN DNR, Half & Half Tax Projects, Western Waterfront Trail).

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE: This resolution authorizes the proper city officials to execute an agreement with the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (MN DNR) under which the MN DNR will provide \$5000 to support the development and comparative analysis of Mud Lake restoration options.

Mud Lake is an approximately 200-acre area of the St. Louis River Estuary that lies between Morgan Park and Gary/New Duluth. Mud Lake is bisected by a city-owned rail causeway leased by the Lake Superior and Mississippi Railroad excursion railway. Future use of riverfront city property in this area will be determined by the Western Waterfront Trail mini-master plan now in progress.

In support of that process, the city of Duluth will convene a technical team of local, state and federal scientists to develop, depict, and assess four alternatives for the causeway across Mud Lake:

1. No change to causeway with trail constructed on the mainland along the perimeter of Mud Lake.
2. Two openings with new rail bridges on a rail-usable causeway with the trail constructed on the mainland along the perimeter of Mud Lake.
3. Two openings with new bike/pedestrian bridges on a causeway repurposed for bike/pedestrian use.
4. Removal of the causeway with vestiges retained on the ends as accessible shore fishing sites and the trail on the mainland along the perimeter of Mud Lake.

This agreement authorizes MN DNR to reimburse the city \$5000 for expenses associated with this alternatives development and assessment process including production of maps, habitat-related metrics, and cost estimates.

In addition to this financial support, the MN DNR and U.S EPA-Mid-Continent Ecological Division will conduct and present the comparative analysis of the relative ecological and recreational benefits of each causeway alternative. Final results of the alternatives development and assessment study will be presented to the Parks Commission to inform their consideration of the final Western Waterfront Trail mini-master plan in 2019.