



Dear GMPT Friends,

The Legislature adjourns a week from today. There is still a lot of work for the Legislature to do and not a lot of time to do it. Here are a few items we're watching and a request/reminder to contact your legislator.

BONDING

Last week, the Senate bonding bill was defeated on the floor by one vote. The constitution requires a 2/3rds majority for a bonding bill. All but one GOP Senator voted against the proposal, which means it failed. Senate leadership has stated that they are not putting forward another bill until the House unveils their proposal.

The House has not released its version of a bonding bill, but has stated it will do that next week. It's original target for the bonding bill was \$600 million. It is not yet known whether they will stick with that target.

TAKE ACTION - It's not too late to reach out to your legislator. If you have not done so in the last week or two, please contact your House member and ask them to include \$5 million for Local Parks and Trails grants in the bonding bill (Bill number [HF 2852](#)). You can find talking points about the importance of these programs on this [informational handout](#).

LEGACY

Earlier this week, Representative Urdahl's Legacy bill passed off the House floor and is now headed to conference committee with the Senate. You can see a side-by-side comparison of the two bills [here](#).

There are several provisions of interest in the House bill:

Reporting Previous State Funding:

Rep. Urdahl modified the reporting requirement for organizations applying for parks and trails appropriations. When it left committee, the applicant had to list all funding sources received in 2006 and later. Now, the organization will have to state whether the project was previously funded by a state appropriation and how it was funded. (See page R43, line 44.4) Similar requirements were adopted with respect to other portions of legacy spending.

Evaluation Recommendations:

There is new language (see page R 44, line 44.9) that would require the DNR in conjunction with the Met Council and the Greater MN Regional Parks & Trails Commission to submit recommendations on methods to evaluate the outcomes and effectiveness of projects funded by the Parks & Trails funds, including recommendations on the amount of funds that should be spent annually on evaluation. Similar requirements were adopted with respect to other portions of legacy spending.

Outdoor Heritage Restrictions:

These do not pertain to Legacy, but may be of interest to members who receive Outdoor Heritage money. They also demonstrate the continuing pushback against DNR acquisition of land by some members. The first is a requirement that the DNR jump through numerous new hoops before acquiring land with money from the Outdoor Heritage fund, including 60 days public notice in a newspaper, a formal hearing, a comment period, and responses to the comments. No additional resources are provided to meet the requirements of this session. The second is a requirement that anyone receiving money from the Outdoor Heritage Fund to acquire land must receive county approval before doing so.

The Senate and House versions will now be discussed in a conference committee. None of the language above was included in Senate version of the bill. The Senate will have the option to accept or reject the language.

If you have questions regarding the activity at the legislature, please contact our lobbyist, Elizabeth Wefel at eawefel@flaherty-hood.com

Update provided by Flaherty & Hood
May 16th, 2016