

# ITASCA-HEARTLAND CONNECTION TRAIL

*CONNECTING ITASCA STATE PARK TO THE HEARTLAND STATE TRAIL*



Photo credit: Deane Johnson.



**\$6.25 MILLION**



**BUILDING OUT A STRATEGIC TRAIL**



LOCAL PROJECT PARTNER:  
**ITASCA-HEARTLAND CONNECTION TRAIL TASK FORCE**



MANAGEMENT AGENCY:  
**MINNESOTA DNR**

### **BRIEF DESCRIPTION**

This project will build on previous funding to construct 14 miles of trail from Itasca State Park on the east side of the trail tunnel under Highway 71 to Emmaville.

### **WHY THIS PROJECT IS IMPORTANT**

The Itasca-Heartland Connection Trail will be a multi-use paved surface that will serve as a strategic connection between Itasca State Park and the Heartland State Trail just east of Park Rapids. Safe access routes to one of the state’s most frequently visited parks have been a longstanding priority for trail users. The proposed trail, which will be located primarily on county and state-owned lands, would increase outdoor opportunities for cyclists, walkers, snowmobilers, and visiting families; these categories include both local residents, who are active trail users, and visitors to this region. The Itasca-Heartland Connection Trail is considered a Primary Corridor in the DNR Division of Parks and Trails’ latest system management plan. Bonding money in 2023 went towards the successful construction of a tunnel under Highway 71, and this bonding request for 2024, determined in communication with the DNR, is for the continuation of the trail from the tunnel towards Emmaville.

### **THIS PROJECT IS READY TO GO!**

The route for this 14-mile stretch of the trail is already established, and will be built on tax-forfeited land.

### **WHO SUPPORTS THIS PROJECT**

- Itascatur Outdoor Activity Club
- Park Rapids Lakes Area Chamber of Commerce
- Park Rapids Lakes Area Convention & Visitors Bureau
- Forest Riders Snowmobile Club
- Friends of Itasca State Park
- Hubbard Bike Group
- Hubbard County
- Heartland Lakes Development Commission
- Itasca-Heartland Connection Trail Steering Citizen Committee
- Parks & Trails Council of