

2005 Project Abstract

For the Period Ending June 30, 2007

TITLE: Tamarack Nature Center Exhibits

PROJECT MANAGER: Marcie Oltman

ORGANIZATION: Ramsey County Parks and Recreation-Tamarack Nature Center

ADDRESS: 5287 Otter Lake Road, White Bear Township, MN 55110

WEB SITE ADDRESS: www.co.ramsey.mn.us/parks/tamarack

FUND: Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund (LCMR)

LEGAL CITATION: ML 2005, First Special Session [Chap. 1], Art. [2], Sec. [11], Subd. 11d.

APPROPRIATION AMOUNT: \$ 95,000

Overall Project Outcome and Results

Tamarack Nature Center's (TNC) *Destination for Discovery* is a multi-year project that redirects TNC away from the role of a traditional nature center towards vital center of community engagement that uses the arts, humanities, and sciences to reconnect people to nature. A comprehensive master plan was produced that describes and illustrates a set of indoor and outdoor experiences that aim to "help people discover the value of nature through art, play, exploration, and inquiry." The detailed concept design of site improvements, natural play areas, exhibits, building renovation, and expansion will be implemented based on funding and further design and planning efforts. When complete, the project will serve between 150,000-200,00 users per year.

Tamarack Nature Center's *Destination for Discovery*, an \$8-10 million dollar project is sponsored by public and private sources. The LCMR grant provided lead funding for Phase I of this multi-year project. Federal funds totaling \$149,000 were successfully secured to match the LCMR funds. A complete 84-page site and interpretive master plan detailing the projects concepts (Phase I) is available for public viewing and comment on the Ramsey County website www.co.ramsey.mn.us/parks/tamarack at Tamarack Nature Center, 5287 Otter Lake Road, White Bear Township, MN 55110 and Ramsey County Parks and Recreation Administration Building, 2015 North Van Dyke St., Maplewood, MN, 55109.

The Master plan has (to date) been presented to and received wide support from the

- Ramsey County Board of Commissioners
- Ramsey County Parks and Recreation Advisory Board
- White Bear Township Board of Supervisors,
- Friends of the Parks and Trails of St. Paul and Ramsey County
- White Bear Center for the Arts Board of Directors
- Minnesota Association for Environmental Education
- Association for Nature Center Administrators
- Children and Nature Network Board of Directors and Regional Leadership
- World Forum on Children and Nature

Next Steps Due to LCMR's early support of this project, TNC's project has been on a parallel trajectory of the "Leave No Child Inside" movement. Our project has received national attention for its innovative and integrated approach to reconnecting children and families to nature. Minnesota has been recognized as a key state in identifying strategies to link policy makers and practitioners from every discipline to encourage the creation of a national culture that values spending time in nature. Because of this, Tamarack Nature Center has received a second federal grant totaling \$118,000 from the Institute for Museum and Library Services to continue on to Phase II (develop and design) of *Destination for Discovery*. This, along with other private and public funding will put the entire project on track for completion within the next three to five years.

LCMR 2005 Final Work Program

Date of Report August 17, 2007

LCMR Final Work Program Report (with budget amendment to close-out)

Date of Work program Approval:

Project Completion Date: June 30, 2007

I. PROJECT TITLE: Tamarack Nature Center Exhibits

Project Manager: Marcie Oltman

Affiliation: Ramsey County Parks and Recreation-Tamarack

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Web Page address: www.co.ramsey.mn.us/parks/tamarack/index.asp

Location: Ramsey County, White Bear Township, MN 55110

Total Biennial LCMR Project Budget:	LCMR Appropriation:	\$ 95,000
	Minus Amount Spent:	\$ 93,182.50
	Equal Balance:	\$ 1,817.50

Legal Citation: ML 2005, First Special Session [Chap. 1], Art. [2], Sec. [11], Subd. 11d.

Appropriation Language: \$47,000 the first year and \$48,000 the second year are from the trust fund to the commissioner of natural resources for an agreement with Ramsey county Parks and Recreation Department to develop interactive ecological exhibits at Tamarack Nature Center.

II. and III. FINAL PROJECT SUMMARY

Overall Project Outcome and Results Tamarack Nature Center's (TNC) *Destination for Discovery* is a multi-year project that redirects TNC away from the role of a traditional nature center towards vital center of community engagement that uses the arts, humanities and sciences to reconnect people to nature. A comprehensive master plan was produced that describes and illustrates a set of indoor and outdoor experiences that aims to "help people discover the value of nature through art, play, exploration and inquiry." The detailed concept design of site improvements, natural play areas, exhibits, building renovation and expansion will be implemented based on funding and further design and planning efforts. When complete, the project will serve over between 150,000-200,00 users per year.

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IV. OUTLINE OF PROJECT RESULTS:

(Budget amendment requested to shift dollars amongst the three results because the firm hired to complete the master plan, HKGi Planners and Architects, required a payment schedule that was more frequent than the three phased results we had anticipated.)

Result 1: Concept Research and Design

Description: Establish exhibit themes, project goals, learner outcomes, interpretive strategies, content and fabrication budget. Includes site visits; research; brainstorming and charrette sessions with exhibit professionals, interpretive staff and volunteers. Deliverables include a brief concept with target budget, opening/closing dates, exhibit team selection and responsibility description, preliminary timetable, concept sketches review and sign-off.

Summary Budget Information for Result 1:	LCMR Budget	12,665.80
	Amount Spent	\$ 12,665.80
	Balance	\$ 0

Final Report Summary: When this project was originally conceived in early 2004, the vision was narrowly defined by an outdated perception of community nature centers and obsolete practices in environmental education. Therefore, our original plan was to update TNC's indoor and outdoor exhibits in order to provide a way to serve and educate the casual visitor. However, through many internal and external discussions, we soon realized that we couldn't do justice to the project without first evaluating our site, practices and programs from a visitor experience perspective. We had also formed

two collaborative partnerships that dramatically changed how we used the site on a day-to-day basis. From then on, the scope of the project changed from “concept, preliminary and final design of exhibits” to “concept design of a comprehensive site and interpretive master plan.” Therefore, *Result 1: Concept Research and Design* expanded to include more than exhibits but still retained the process as described.

Budget Discrepancy: The amount spent in Result 1 was less than originally intended because the project framework was done in-house with project staff. This allowed the necessary discussions concerning philosophy, programs, partnerships, concepts and messages upfront with appropriate stakeholders. A small amount of the consultant budget was utilized to have a peer review of the plans and framework. This approach used the time and money that would have normally been used in planning invested in the master plan.

Result 2: Preliminary Design /Content Development

Description: Expanding the concept into a clear picture of the finished exhibit through idea refinement, focused content research, artifact sourcing, and some prototyping. Deliverables include a design charrette summary, a preliminary design summary including description of project to date, component list and descriptions, preliminary floor layout, with sketches and rough descriptions of every component, refined budget and schedule, review and sign-off.

Summary Budget Information for Result 2:	LCMR Budget	40,817.42
	Amount Spent	\$ 40, 817.42
	Balance	\$ 0

Final Report Summary: In-house concept development continued concurrent with the search for a design/development firm. Through a competitive bid process, Hoisington Koegler Group, Inc. was selected and approved as the design/development team by the Ramsey County Board of Commissioners. After some initial foundation work with the consultants, we began *Result 2: Preliminary Design/Content Development* through a series of design charrettes with various stakeholders: volunteers, board members, staff and community leaders. As with the previous result, the process remained the same as described although the deliverables centered more on conceptual drawings and project narratives for the project as a whole instead of on specific exhibit components.

Budget Discrepancy: The firm hired to complete the master plan, HKGi Planners and Architects, required a payment schedule that was more frequent than the three phased results we had anticipated. Therefore, several invoices were placed together to approximate the result time frame and budget presented here.

Result 3: Final Exhibit Design

Description:

Final design results in design intent drawings and equipment specifications, finalized exhibit elements, color/material/finish boards, final floor plan and elevations, graphic format, lighting and electrical design, review and sign-off.

Summary Budget Information for Result 3:

LCMR Budget	39,699.28
Amount Spent	\$ 39,699.28
Balance	\$ 0

Final Report Summary: *Result 3: Final Exhibit Design* changed significantly because of the broader approach to the vision. Instead of final designs for exhibits only, the final product/deliverable is an 84 page master plan describing and illustrating the vision, purpose and use of the plan; project goals, mission, guiding principles and audience; an interpretive plan describing essential experiences and the integration of early childhood education and arts programming; an evaluation of the site and conceptual plans for creating indoor and outdoor destinations for discovery. It does however, include fairly detailed illustrations and descriptions of indoor and outdoor exhibits appropriate to the new direction.

Budget Discrepancy: See Result II.

V. TOTAL LCMR PROJECT BUDGET:

		LCMR Budget	Actual \$ Spent	Balance
All Results:	Personnel:	\$0	\$0	\$0
All Results:	Equipment:	9,350.80	\$9,350.80	\$ 0
All Results:	Development:	\$0	\$0	\$0
All Results:	Acquisition:	\$0	\$0	\$0
All Results:	Other:	\$ 83,831.70	\$ 83,831.70	\$ 0
TOTAL LCMR PROJECT BUDGET:		\$95,000	\$ 93,182.50	\$ 1, 817.50

Budget Discrepancy:

1. \$1,000.00 was budgeted for instate travel which was ultimately not necessary.
2. The bid from the contractor came in under the budgeted amount which resulted in a balance of \$817.50.

VI. OTHER FUNDS & PARTNERS:

A. Project Partners: None

B. Other Funds being Spent during the Project Period: \$149, 948 (Source: Institute of Museum and Library Services, Museums for America Grant. Status: pending)

C. Required Match (if applicable): Not Applicable

D. Past Spending: \$350,000 Building Addition (Met. Council, Regional Park CIP)

E. Time: Project will not exceed grant timeframe.

VII. DISSEMINATION: TNC's *Destination for Discovery* Master plan has (to date) been presented to the Ramsey County Board of Commissioners, White Bear Township Board of Supervisors, Ramsey County Parks and Recreation Advisory Board, Friends of Ramsey County Parks and Trails, White Bear Center for the Arts Board of Directors, Tamarack Nature Center volunteers and program participants, Minnesota Association for Environmental Education, Association for Nature Center Administrators, Children and Nature Network Board of Directors and Regional Leadership and the World Forum on Children and Nature among others. It will be available for public viewing and comment on the Ramsey County Website, at TNC and Ramsey County Parks and Recreation Administration Building. We will continue disseminating and eliciting feedback on the plan into Phase II of the project.

VIII. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS: Periodic work program progress reports were submitted on March 31, 2006; June 30, 2006; A final work program report and associated products submitted August 17, 2007.

IX. RESEARCH PROJECTS:

Proposal Title: Tamarack Nature Center Exhibits # (O-18)

Project Manager Name: Marcie Oltman

LCMR Reauested Dollars: \$ 95,000

- 1) See list of non-eligible expenses, do not include any of these items in your budget sheet
- 2) Remove any budget item lines not applicable

2005 LCMR Proposal Budget	Budget Amendment	Result 1 Budget:	Revised Budget 6/30/07	Amount Spent 6/30/07	Balance 6/30/07	Result 2 Budget:	Revised Budget 6/30/07	Amount Spent 6/30/07	Balance 6/30/07	Result 3 Budget:	Revised Budget 6/30/07	Amount Spent 6/30/07	Balance 6/30/07	
		Concept Research and Design				Preliminary Design/Content Development				Final Exhibit Design				
BUDGET ITEM														Revised Total
Contracts														
Professional/technical														
Landscape Architect (to be selected through a competitive RFP process)		6,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	6,000.00	6,000.00	6,000.00	0.00	6,000.00	6,000.00	6,000.00	0.00	12,000.00
Exhibit Designers (to be selected through a competitive RFP process)		25,000.00	3,315.00	3,315.00	0.00	21,000.00	34,817.42	34,817.42	0.00	21,000.00	33,699.28	33,699.28	0.00	71,831.70
Office equipment & computers - NOT ALLOWED unless unique to the project														0.00
Graphic Design Equipment*		9,350.80	9,350.80	9,350.80	0.00									9,350.80
Color Laser Printer, specialized paper, ink, etc.	8,686.79													
Digital Camera														
Scanner														
Laminator and supplies	654.01													
Paper Cutter														
Design Software														
Travel expenses in Minnesota		1,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
COLUMN TOTAL		\$41,350.80	\$12,665.80	\$12,665.80	\$0.00	\$27,000.00	\$40,817.42	\$40,817.42	\$0.00	\$27,000.00	\$39,699.28	\$39,699.28	\$0.00	93,182.50