Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund
2011-2012 Request for Proposals (RFP)

Subd: 05k

Project Title: Community-Based Reduction of Water Contaminants

Category: G. Environmental Education

Total Project Budget: $ $250,000

Proposed Project Time Period for the Funding Requested: 2 yrs, July 2011 - June 2013

Other Non-State Funds (secured): $ 0

Summary:

We will reduce estrogenic chemical water pollution by helping local governments identify and implement green practices to reduce their and their citizens' pollution from cleaning products, pesticides and pharmaceuticals.

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Location:

Region: Statewide

Ecological Section: Statewide

County Name: Statewide

City / Township:

I. PROJECT STATEMENT

The goal of this project is to protect human health and the health of aquatic and terrestrial species by promoting sustainable green practices at the community and household level to reduce inputs of pesticides (including glyophosphate and 2,4-D), cleaning chemicals (including disinfectants, detergent breakdown products and compounds used as surfactants in cleaning products and pesticides) and pharmaceuticals (including antibiotics) into Minnesota's lakes, rivers and streams, thereby reducing pollution levels in these same waters.

The main outcome of this project will be that Minnesota water pollution will be reduced as at least two local governments will reduce their contributions to water pollution by implementing pollution prevention measures. In addition, citizens of these communities will also reduce their use of the target chemicals as they increase their knowledge and understanding of pollution prevention practices. (We recognize that we will fully reach our long-term goal only as the practices promoted by this project become widely adopted. For that reason, the project is designed to be replicable and is a part of our larger ongoing strategy to implement a variety of toxic pollution control practices throughout the region.)

To reach these outcomes, we will work with two target communities to help implement pollution reduction methods within their communities, in part through the development of a "Toxics Reduction Toolbox" that can also serve as a resource for additional interested municipalities. We will also assist the two target communities in creating and implementing citizen education programs and conduct outreach to health care facilities within the two communities.

Non-point sources of water pollution include cleaning chemicals, lawn care products and pharmaceutical wastes that leach from landfills and are discharged into wastewater effluent, polluting Minnesota's lakes, rivers and streams. The US Geological Survey (USGS) has detected 130 man-made chemicals in Minnesota's streams and rivers, including many hormone disrupters, and often *after* wastewater treatment. While the sources of these chemicals are many, local government units (such as cities, counties and school districts) and health care institutions can make a significant contribution to reducing water pollution from persistent toxic chemicals by implementing protective practices, green purchasing standards and citizen education.

II. DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT ACTIVITIES

Activity 1: Work with two communities to select and implement pollution prevention practices, create and implement citizen education campaigns, and conduct outreach to health care facilities. **Budget:** $197,500

We will identify two communities that are interested in implementing pollution prevention practices but lack the knowledge or other resources to do so. We anticipate that we will work with the City of Duluth (where the Minnesota Public Interest Research Group, or MPRIRG, will assist with community outreach) and St. Paul-Ramsey County Public Health, as both of these communities have agreed to participate.

We will leverage many of the resources currently available on pollution prevention practices, but will go beyond simply presenting the communities with a (sometimes bewilderingly large) menu of options. Instead, we will work with the communities to identify which specific practices are likely to be most effective in their community and help them analyze where they will get the greatest "bang for the buck." These practices are likely to include integrated pest management; replacing toxic cleaning products with environmentally preferable cleaning products; and safer disposal of pharmaceutical waste, but we will consider the full range of possibilities for each community. We will also provide technical assistance to each community in developing citizen education materials and media communications strategies specific to the opportunities and challenges in each community to inform residents of actions they can take to prevent these same pollution problems. Finally, we will conduct outreach to health care facilities (such as hospitals, clinics or nursing homes) in each community. This will include inviting staff from the facilities to trainings and helping the facilities identify pollution prevention measures that would be appropriate for their facilities.

In order to quantify municipal reductions in pollution emissions, we will perform a baseline assessment to determine the types and amount of chemicals used by the municipalities (including analysis

of the associated risks, toxicity, chemical characteristics and known presence in nearby water bodies of the chemicals) through interviews and surveys of municipal employees and analysis of practices. We will collect parallel information at the end of the project and compare the two data sets to determine the amount of pollution reduction resulting from project activities. We will also analyze this information within the context of local water pollution problems and report this information to the communities to give them a sense of the impact of their actions. Intermediate evaluation will be conducted through discussion with municipal employees and used to make adjustments to the project activities during the project period.

We will use focus groups and consumer surveys (which will ask questions about behavior change related to use of targeted pollutants) in each community to evaluate the effectiveness of our citizen outreach efforts. We will also use questionnaires to characterize the effect of our outreach on pollution prevention practices at the health care facilities where we have done outreach.

In addition, we will consult with experts at USGS and Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) to characterize potential impacts of all of these pollution prevention efforts on pollution levels in wastewater or surface water in the target communities.

Outcome	**Completion Date**
1. Two communities will be identified and commit to implementing pollution prevention strategies.	*September 2011*
2. Pollution prevention measures will be implemented by each community.	*Feb.-June 2012*
3. Citizen education materials will be developed and distributed to at least 25% of the residents in each community. (We estimate we will reach at least 40,000 citizens.)	*April 2012*
4. Staff members from at least three health care facilities in each community will attend toxic pollution prevention trainings and their home facilities will identify pollution prevention measures appropriate for their facilities.	*Feb-June 2012*
5. Municipal use of target chemicals in the two communities will be reduced by an estimated 30 to 50 percent.	*July 2013*
6. Use of target chemicals by citizen participants in the two communities will be reduced by an estimated 10 percent.	*July 2013*
7. Use of target chemicals by participating health care facilities will be reduced by an estimated 5 percent.	*July 2013*
8. Levels of estrogenic pollutants will be reduced in Lake Superior, the French and Mississippi Rivers, in Battle Creek and other identified local water bodies.	*July 2013*

Activity 2: Develop and distribute Toxics Reduction Toolbox **Budget:** $52,500

To assist with Activity 1, we will develop an online Toxics Reduction Toolbox. The toolbox will leverage existing information, but will provide a much-needed single location to access information that is currently time- and effort-intensive to gather, including case studies, examples of procedures and policies, purchasing standards, standards for pharmaceutical waste disposal, information on integrated pest management and environmentally sensitive cleaning products, and links to stand-alone resources including the MPCA's green cleaning standards. Unlike most such resources which are geared toward individual consumers, this toolbox will be geared to municipal audiences and usable by health care facilities. We will make municipalities and health care facilities beyond the two direct project participants aware of the toolbox through outreach to local associations and associations of cities and counties, the MPCA, existing connections within the health care community, and media coverage of the two project communities. We will deploy a user evaluation form to evaluate the usability of the toolbox itself as well as solicit feedback about ways to make the Toolbox more useful for the end users, and use the results to guide updates and revisions to the Toolbox. We will also track the number of downloads of the toolbox.

Outcome	Completion Date
1. Online Toxic Reduction Toolbox will be developed and deployed.	*May 2012*
2. Communities and health care facilities around Minnesota will be made aware of the Toolbox. We estimate that the toolbox will be downloaded at least 1,200 times.	*June 2012*

III. PROJECT STRATEGY

A. Project Team/Partners

The project will be coordinated by Kathleen Schuler, MPH, Senior Policy Analyst at the Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy (IATP) and Co-Director of the Healthy Legacy project. She will be assisted by the Healthy Legacy Project Coordinator at IATP, and IATP communications and IT staff. MPIRG will provide on the ground staff in Duluth and Northern Minnesota.

B. Timeline Requirements. This is a two year project to allow time to identify partner communities, undertake educational activities, and implement pollution reduction practices.

C. Long-Term Strategy and Future Funding Needs

This project will be part of an ongoing larger effort to protect the health of Minnesota citizens and our environment by IATP, the Healthy Legacy coalition, the MPCA and cities and counties throughout Minnesota. We continue to pursue additional funding for this effort.

2011-2012 Detailed Project Budget

IV. TOTAL TRUST FUND REQUEST BUDGET: 2 years

BUDGET ITEM	AMOUNT
Personnel: *All personnel expenses are 78% salary, 22% benefits*	
Kathleen Schuler, Project Manager (IATP Senior Policy Analyst) - One person, .25 FTE in years 1 and 2	$ 42,880
Senior Project Staff (IATP Healthy Legacy Project Coordinator) - One person, .45 FTE in year 1 and .4 FTE in year 2	$ 65,280
Project Associate - One person, .15 FTE in years 1 and 2	$ 21,120
Communications Director - One person, .08 FTE in years 1 and 2	$ 13,517
Communications Associate - One person, .1 FTE in years 1 and 2	$ 13,056
Website Developer (to create, maintain and update Toolbox Web site) - One person, .15 FTE in year 1, .08 FTE in year 2	$ 15,309
Contracts:	
Contract with MPIRG *(The Minnesota Public Interest Research Group is a grassroots, student-directed, nonprofit, nonpartisan organization that empowers and trains students and engages the community to take collective action in the public interest statewide. For nearly 40 years, MPIRG has worked to improve the lives of Minnesotans through education, outreach, community engagement, and collective advocacy around issues that benefit our communities and the natural environment. MPIRG has established working relationships with communities in and around Duluth and extensive experience working with the public on toxic chemical issues. These funds will support on the ground work in the Duluth area parallel to that being done by IATP staff in the St. Paul-area community. They will also assist with and provide feedback on Toolbox development.)*	$ 60,000
Contract with Web site developer to assist with design and implementation of Toolbox Website.	$ 2,500
Travel:	
In-state travel to potential and selected partner communities. *Travel expenses will include mileage at the standard government rate or car rental expenses (whichever is less), meals, and lodging if necessary.*	$ 6,838
Additional Budget Items:	
Publication and printing expenses for outreach materials and reporting.	$ 5,000
Meetings in potential and selected partner communities *(Funds will cover meeting space, speaker fees and meeting materials. No LCCMR funds will be spent on refreshments.)*	$ 4,500
TOTAL ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES TRUST FUND $ REQUEST	$ 250,000

V. OTHER FUNDS

SOURCE OF FUNDS	AMOUNT	Status
Other Non-State $ Being Applied to Project During Project Period:		
While we have not secured additional leverage for this project at this time, we are continuing to develop and submit proposals to other funding sources and anticipate that we will secure additional funding from non-state sources.	*to be determined*	*pending*
Other State $ Being Applied to Project During Project Period: *N/A*		
In-kind Services During Project Period: *N/A*		
Remaining $ from Current ENRTF Appropriation (if applicable): *N/A*		
Funding History: *Although no funds have yet been secured for activities directly relevant to this specific funding request, we are in the process of pursuing other funding as indicated above.*		

Project Director
Kathleen Schuler, MPH, Senior Policy Analyst at the Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy (IATP) and Co-Director of the Healthy Legacy Project, advocates for policies that protect human health and the environment from toxic chemicals that get into our food system and into our bodies. She also provides information for consumers on reducing their personal exposures, such the IATP Smart Guides. Ms. Schuler has a Master of Public Health degree from the University of Minnesota. As a Bush Leadership Fellow in environmental health, she studied at Boston University and did an internship with the Center for Health, Environment and Justice. Prior to her work in the environmental health field, Ms. Schuler led policy initiatives in Medicaid managed care, including working with health care companies at the Minnesota Department of Human Services, where she worked for 17 years. She is an active member of the Minnesota Public Health Association and Environmental Justice Advocates of Minnesota.

Organizational Description
Founded in 1986, the Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy (IATP) is a tax-exempt 501(c)3 organization whose mission is to work locally and globally at the intersection of policy and practice to ensure fair and sustainable food, farm and trade systems. We work to build bridges between different constituencies with the goal of developing local, state, national and international policies that will promote environmental and human health; ensure socially and ecologically sustainable development; value human rights; increase the capacity of civil society to participate in policymaking; and strengthen local and regional economies.

For the past five years, IATP has been at the vanguard of promoting green chemistry and sustainable production. Through a number of initiatives, we help businesses and consumers identify and implement strategies to reduce their exposure to toxic chemicals and their contributions to such pollution. Among many other accomplishments, we have:

- Founded and co-direct Healthy Legacy, a statewide coalition working to build support for and pass broad chemical policy reform in Minnesota and increase consumer awareness of strategies to reduce their exposure to toxic chemicals. Our key partner in this effort is Clean Water Fund.
- Participated in the founding of the Business-NGO Working Group on Safer Chemicals and Sustainable Materials, which brings NGOs and businesses together to identify ways businesses can produce more sustainable products and reduce their environmental impacts.
- Co-organized a conference with the University of Minnesota to engage local companies in exploring emerging green chemistry alternatives for use in their products.
- Begun developing relationships with Minnesota state agencies positioned to advance green business practices in the state.

IATP has an extensive track record of successfully leveraging local, regional and national media coverage to bring attention to issues of concern, and our work to protect human and environmental health from toxic chemicals in particular. (For example, the St. Paul Pioneer Press ran an extensive front page article on our work on toxic chemicals in February 2010.) In addition, we have extensive experience creating and distributing user-friendly and accessible resources to help both individuals and institutions make more sustainable purchasing decisions and protect human and environmental health from toxic chemical pollution. (Many of these "Smart Guides" can be downloaded on our Web site at http://www.iatp.org/foodandhealth/.)