

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

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**Subd:** 08d

**Project Title:** Experiential Environmental Education for Urban Youth

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**Category:** G. Environmental Education

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**Total Project Budget:** \$ 708,000

**Proposed Project Time Period for the Funding Requested:** 3 yrs, July 2011 - June 2014

**Other Non-State Funds (secured):** \$ 0

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**Summary:**

Hennepin County will partner with community groups in North Minneapolis to initiate new Environmental Education programs targeting inner city youth. These programs will provide hands-on, experiential outdoor learning opportunities.

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**Sponsoring Organization:** Hennepin County

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**Location:**

**Region:** Metro

**Ecological Section:** Minnesota and NE Iowa Morainal (222M)

**County Name:** Hennepin

**City / Township:** Minneapolis

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## 2011-2012 MAIN PROPOSAL

**PROJECT TITLE:** *UrbanWatch*: Environmental Education for Urban Youth.

### I. PROJECT STATEMENT

Hennepin County will develop a new program called *UrbanWatch* that will focus on teachers and students in the urban core of Minneapolis, to implement and support environmental education in schools and communities that have traditionally been lacking in environmental programs. Richard Louv has argued in his book *Last Child in the Woods* children today spend less time outdoors and fail to develop an appreciation and connection to nature which may in turn lead to depression, obesity, and isolation from the environment. This risk is even higher for urban students whose exposure to environmental education is minimal at best.

Addressing the “No Child Left Inside” legislation, *UrbanWatch* will bring a collective of proven curricula and tools to empower teachers and at-risk students to explore, monitor, enhance, and protect environmental resources. It will increase their knowledge and skills regarding ecology, agriculture, water resources, and biological diversity in their own neighborhoods. These experiences will equip students and community members with the information necessary for healthier communities, a greater sense of stewardship, and increased appreciation for their natural world. *UrbanWatch*, while new to Minnesota has its roots in Illinois where protocols for urban monitoring were developed by the Illinois Department of Natural Resources and the Illinois Field Museum. It is our intention to take the building blocks of this program and bring them to Minnesota to increase awareness of the environment.

As a part of the *UrbanWatch* model, *Growing Futures* will be another new initiative for Minnesota. *Growing Futures* will use the model of “Growing Power” from Milwaukee, Wisconsin to expose urban students to the concept of agriculture, native plant use, and the importance of green space. Locations in north Minneapolis and the Hennepin County Home School will be the hosts for pilot sites to grow gardens for produce, beautification and restoration. The staff and students will be responsible for garden establishment, care, harvest and selling of produce. Staff at Gardening Matters will share their expertise in garden development and maintenance, community outreach and education. We will be actively seeking to develop partnerships with the University of Minnesota; including Extension, the Institute on the Environment and Urban Research and Outreach/Engagement Center.

### II. DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT ACTIVITIES

**Budget:** \$ 114,485

#### Activity 1: **TEACHER ACADEMY**

In many Minneapolis schools, teachers struggle with limited resources and a lack of supplies for environmental science instruction. This Teacher Academy will provide curriculum instruction in water resources, ecology and agriculture. In combination with curriculum, teachers will be eligible for \$500 each to implement projects into their classroom and/or school. The curricula that will be offered are: Project Wet and MinnAqua from the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources; Schoolyard Ecology Explorations from UM Extension and River Watch from Hennepin County. Hennepin County will rely on its successful and established relationship with many Minneapolis and suburban schools to offer and implement these curricula.

<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Completion Date</b>
1. Forty teachers trained in curriculum and environmental monitoring each year	October 2011,12
2. Eight Hundred students educated through curriculum each year	Dec 2011, 12
3. Thirty schoolyard demonstration/educational gardens installed	December 2013

**Activity 2: GROWING FUTURES****Budget: \$593,515**

The *Growing Futures* pilot project will assist under-represented and at-risk students in North Minneapolis and the Hennepin County Home School, by providing opportunities to plan, develop, and implement gardens in their communities. Through *Growing Futures*, students and residents will experience the concepts of math, environmental science, community participation, business and health in a hands-on environment. *Growing Futures* gardens will be used for food production, beautification, habitat restorations, and rain gardens. We will utilize Hennepin County resources, including the existing greenhouse at the Adult Correction Facility to grow plants for gardens on public and county property. The residents of the Facility will also be given the opportunity for stewardship and partnership with the community through growing and nurturing plant stock.

<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Completion Date</b>
1. Prepare greenhouse for project, establish stock	October 2011
2. Produce needed plant material at Hennepin County Adult Corrections greenhouse each year	May 2012,13
3. Plan and install 15 gardens of fresh produce, native plantings, and rain gardens into urban neighborhoods in Minneapolis and the County Home School each year	October 2012 October 2013
4. Provide a rehabilitation tool for 20 adult and juvenile offenders in Hennepin County and 40 at-risk students; educate/train students in agricultural, ecological sustainable and entrepreneurial skills	December 2013
5. Provide 500 students and community members with the information necessary for healthier communities	December 2013

**III. PROJECT STRATEGY****A. Project Team/Partners**

Hennepin County Environmental Services will serve as the Project Manager. Involved in project development, direction and implementation will be: Mary Karius, Hennepin County Environmental Services; Ellen Sones, Joel Settles, Rosemary Lavin Hennepin County Environmental Services; NorthPoint Health and Wellness Center (Stella Whitney-West, CEO, Roy Richardson COO); Kirsten Saylor, Director Gardening Matters; Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board; Frederick Bryan, Director Hennepin County Home School; Jodi DeLau, Principal, Hennepin County Home School; Bernard Ruess, Facilities Manager Hennepin County Home School and Adult Corrections; Betsy Wieland, University of Minnesota Extension.

Receiving money will be (A) NorthPoint Health and Wellness Center for staff and programming (\$215,000) and student stipends (\$25,000). Stipends will be given to students that are involved in all aspects of the planting projects from development to planting to nurturing to sale of any produce. (B)Hennepin County Adult Corrections Facility for staff (\$128,520) and greenhouse supplies and plant materials (\$142,900); (C) Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (\$40,100) and the (D) University of Minnesota Extension (\$54,296)for curricula instruction; (E) Gardening Matters for technical assistance for greenhouse set-up and maintenance and garden development and maintenance (\$50,000); F)\$25,000 to Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board for use at the JD Rivers Childrens Garden and miscellaneous programming for North Minneapolis children. Time spent by Hennepin County Environmental Services staff and University of Minnesota Extension staff will be an in-kind contribution.

**B. Timeline Requirements**

Curriculum instruction will be summer 2011, 2012, with implementation in the fall of the 2011, 2012. Greenhouse preparation will begin July 2011 with first set of plants ready for the 2012 growing season. Propagation of plant stock continues into 2012 ready for the 2013 growing season.

**C. Long-Term Strategy and Future Funding Needs**

*UrbanWatch* will become a permanent part of Hennepin County Environmental Services programs. We will continue to work with urban schools and partners to provide curriculum, monitoring programs, and outreach opportunities and search for ways to implement progressive programs. We will continue to partner with local organizations, schools and teachers to implement projects and events that will be appropriate for that community. Continued funding will be sought through both public and private means by project partners. We will also pursue Watershed Organization grant funding to implement community-based projects and initiatives.

## 2011-2012 Detailed Project Budget

### IV. TOTAL TRUST FUND REQUEST BUDGET 3 years

BUDGET ITEM	AMOUNT
<b>Personnel for TWO years:</b> <b>Hennepin County Adult Corrections Facility:</b> One Full-time (100%) greenhouse coordinator base salary \$47,000 plus 35% benefits (\$128,520) <b>NorthPoint Health and Wellness Center:</b> staff to include community organizer, outreach coordinator; evaluation coordinator (\$215,000.00); youth stipends (\$25,000) <b>Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board:</b> Expand JD Rivers Children's Garden and institute programming for Northside children (\$25,000) <b>Gardening Matters:</b> Technical support for greenhouse and garden set-up, development and implementation.	\$ 443,520
<b>Contracts:</b> Minnesota Department of Natural Resources: <i>Project WET/MinAqua</i> training, curriculum, implementation money for 30 attendees per year (\$40,100.00) University of Minnesota Extension <i>Schoolyard Ecology Explorations</i> for 20 attendees per year including curriculum and implementation money for schools (\$54,296.00)	\$ 94,396
<b>Equipment/Tools/Supplies:</b> Hennepin County River Watch, 20 sets of main equipment (3 each of waders and 3 each of dip nets) for 20 teachers (\$12,000) to start stream monitoring. Greenhouse supplies: shovels, hoe, rakes, brooms, hose, hose winder, stakes, twine, soil, fertilizer, peat moss, starter trays and pots, baskets, racks, sprinkler, wheel barrow (\$142,900)	\$ 154,900
<b>Travel:</b> Busing costs for students/teachers for field trips during Teacher Academy, summer or school year, etc. \$500/trip = 10 trips over 2 years	\$ 5,000
Additional Budget Items: River Watch Training workshops for 40 teachers including all materials, curriculum, and assistance in classroom and field during monitoring seasons; with \$300 in implementation money to purchase monitoring equipment of their choice following recommendations.	\$ 8,200
<b>TOTAL ENVIRONMENT &amp; NATURAL RESOURCES TRUST FUND \$ REQUEST</b>	<b>\$ 706,016</b>

### V. OTHER FUNDS

SOURCE OF FUNDS	AMOUNT	Status
<b>In-kind Services During Project Period:</b> Two Environmentalists from Hennepin County Environmental Services ( 5% and 10%) and one Extension Educator from the University of Minnesota Extension(5%)	\$ 38,480	Secured
<b>Funding History:</b> Minnehaha Creek Watershed District - River Watch Program (\$5,000) Shingle Creek Watershed Management Commission- River Watch Program (\$3,000) West Mississippi Watershed Management Commission - River Watch Program (\$1,000)	\$ 9,000	Secured

Project Manager:

Mary Karius

Ms. Karius is an Environmentalist with the Hennepin County Department of Environmental Services. Her experience includes twelve years working in natural resources; coordinating and implementing environmental educational and outreach programs; coordinating volunteer monitoring programs in the metro area since 1998 and throughout Minnesota from 2005-2007.

Hennepin County Environmental Services mission statement is

To preserve and enhance Hennepin County's environment for future generations through the responsible management of wastes and natural resources and the promotion of environmental stewardship.