



Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund (ENRTF) M.L. 2017 LCCMR Work Plan

Date of Submission: September 14, 2016

Date of Next Status Update Report: 30 April 2018

Date of Work Plan Approval:

Project Completion Date: June 30, 2020

Does this submission include an amendment request?

PROJECT TITLE: Bird City – Education for lasting conservation

Project Manager: Joanna Eckles

Organization: Audubon Minnesota

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Location: Statewide

Total ENRTF Project Budget:

ENRTF Appropriation: \$280,000

Amount Spent: 0

Balance: \$280,000

Legal Citation: M.L. 2017, Chp. xx, Sec. xx, Subd. xx

Appropriation Language:

[To be inserted following the MN Legislative Session in Spring 2017. This will be blank for the initial submission and will be provided to you at a later date.]

I. PROJECT TITLE: Bird City – Education for lasting conservation

II. PROJECT STATEMENT:

Through Bird City Minnesota, Audubon Minnesota will engage up to 60 communities over the next 3 years to improve habitat and protect birds. Modeled after Bird City Wisconsin, which has recognized almost 100 WI Bird City communities since 2010, and Tree City USA, Bird City Minnesota provides local governments with a proven conservation roadmap, leveraging their resources to achieve conservation results and greater community and individual awareness.

Audubon Minnesota has been piloting Bird City with several communities since 2015. The Cities of Saint Paul and Hastings worked with Audubon to test and provide input on everything from the criteria that will be required to the recognition materials that will be received to the application forms and reporting requirements. Both communities have now been recognized as Minnesota’s first Bird City communities. We are now using what we created in the initial pilot phase to refine and finalize program criteria and educational resources to allow us to work with the next set of interested communities in a secondary pilot phase through June 2017.

A 3-year investment in Bird City starting in July 2017 will allow us to take the pilot program statewide ultimately reaching 40-60 communities by 2020. Leveraging the power of local governments, Bird City will reach at least 400 staff / elected officials and 400,000 citizens involving them in hundreds of projects to:

1. Increase habitat through restoration, adding native plants and removing invasive species
2. Reduce threats by reducing window collisions, light pollution and toxins / pesticide use
3. Engage citizens through restorations, training, bird / nest monitoring and school / public birding events

A community applies to be a Bird City with the backing of the Mayor, city council and staff and assistance of partners. The community is recognized when they complete 8 bird-friendly actions in 3 categories (above). They are motivated by existing sustainability / stewardship goals, prominent public recognition and community passion. They renew their participation annually and add more and deeper actions and partnerships.

As a result:

- All bird habitat types and all Minnesota birds, whether resident or migratory species, could benefit
- Highly effective, locally led partnerships are formed, creating a long-lasting conservation ethic

Birds are an ideal focus for environmental education and conservation. They are beautiful and easily accessible, no matter where you are in the state. At a time when wildlife habitat is being severely degraded and people are increasingly disconnected with nature, working with Minnesota’s citizens, from small towns to big cities, to conserve birds and their habitats is one of the best ways to change this negative trend.

III. OVERALL PROJECT STATUS UPDATES: (250 words suggested)

Project Status as of 30 April 2018:

Project Status as of 31 October 2018:

Project Status as of 30 April 2019:

Project Status as of 31 October 2019:

Project Status as of 30 April 2020:

Overall Project Outcomes and Results: 15 August 2020

IV. PROJECT ACTIVITIES AND OUTCOMES:

ACTIVITY 1: Engage and enroll 40-60 communities statewide in Bird City Minnesota

Description: Identify and engage community leaders (council, business, tourism, community groups) throughout the state to participate in Bird City Minnesota. Develop materials, resources and tools to guide communities to improve habitat and reduce threats and to disseminate to their citizens, allowing the program statewide reach.

- Initially we will create a list identifying communities throughout the state of Minnesota that have high potential for Bird City involvement due to strong birding and nature partners and established birding resources such as known birding hotspots and Important Bird Areas (IBAs).
- We will use pilot application materials developed over the past two years before ENRTF funding to develop a website / online system for participating communities to apply and renew their Bird City applications, get resources and materials to guide their actions and that will allow us to track results over time and recognize communities for their actions.
- We will make an estimated 80 visits to communities throughout the state to make presentations, conduct training and meet with community groups to promote the Bird City program and its benefits to human and environmental health. Travel will include visiting potential and participating communities to promote the program and recognize successful Bird City communities.

Summary Budget Information for Activity 1:

ENRTF Budget: \$ 131,760
 Amount Spent: \$ 0
 Balance: \$ 131,760

Outcome	Completion Date
1. A prioritized list of potential Bird City Minnesota communities based on a variety of factors and including contacts and potential local partners.	October 2017
2. A website /online system for Bird City communities to apply and renew their participation, access information, materials and resources, learn from other Bird City communities and track their results over time.	March 2018
3. At least 40 Bird City Minnesota communities enrolled in the program, fulfilling a minimum of 8 actions each in 3 categories (habitat improvement, protection from threats and citizen engagement). Travel to Bird Cities to honor and provide training.	June 2020

Activity 1 Status as of 30 April 2018:

Activity 1 Status as of 31 October 2018:

Activity 1 Status as of 30 April 2019:

Activity 1 Status as of 31 October 2019:

Activity 1 Status as of 30 April 2020:

Final Report Summary: 15 August 2020

ACTIVITY 2: Implement projects to improve habitat, protect birds and involve citizens

Description:

To increase knowledge and skills of the public and students and to cultivate an on-going commitment to sustaining their bird-friendly community we will guide, train and educate residents and local officials in habitat restoration, threat reduction, citizen involvement, and birding tourism within their communities.

- Coordinating with the Minnesota DNR we will:
 - Conduct *Flying WILD* workshops for a total of approximately 50 educators in Bird City communities to help bring bird education to local youth. *Flying WILD* introduces students in grades 5-9 to bird conservation through standards-based classroom activities and environmental stewardship projects. Educators will attend a workshop, receive curriculum materials and learn classroom and outdoor activities that they can take to their students immediately.
 - Conduct 10 tourism workshops engaging approximately 200 local officials, businesspeople and other stakeholders in participating and potential Bird City communities. Workshops bring together a variety of local community members to discuss the value of promoting wildlife tourism and understanding and promoting local tourism assets
- Because Bird City communities are required to complete a minimum number of actions in specific categories, we will be able to document at least:
 - 40 participating communities
 - 400 participating staff / elected officials
 - 80 concrete actions taken by communities to reduce threats to birds including reducing chemical use, reducing light pollution, fixing dangerous windows and encouraging residents to keep pets from disturbing wildlife.
 - 120 habitat improvement projects such as restorations, addition of native plants, removal of invasive species, improvement of nesting opportunities for birds and water quality improvement projects.
 - 80 citizen engagement projects from nest monitoring to planting to bird surveying involving adults, youth and families.
 - 100 birding related events statewide.
 - Together those actions and projects will influence at least 400,000 people.

Outcomes	Completion Date
1. ~50 trained educators bringing bird education to Bird City communities through the existing <i>Flying Wild</i> curriculum	June 2020
2. ~200 local officials trained to tap into wildlife tourism opportunities and benefits locally	June 2020
3. ~80 threat reduction projects (ex. Reducing pesticide use, fixing dangerous windows, encouraging cats indoors) involving ~8000 people in BC communities	June 2020
4. ~120 habitat improvement projects (ex. Restoration, demonstration gardens, conversion of turf grass along boulevards / parks, adopt pollinator/bird friendly policy)	June 2020
5. ~80 citizen engagement projects (ex. Nest monitoring, restoring habitat, youth birding club, accessible birding trails, multi-lingual birding resources)	June 2020
6. ~100 birding events in ~40 communities over 3 years reaching at least 10,000 people	June 2020

Summary Budget Information for Activity 2:

ENRTF Budget: \$ 148,240
 Amount Spent: \$ 0
 Balance: \$ 148,240

Activity 2 Status as of 30 April 2018:

Activity 2 Status as of 31 October 2018:

Activity 2 Status as of 30 April 2019:

Activity 2 Status as of 31 October 2019:

Activity 2 Status as of 30 April 2020:

Final Report Summary: 15 August 2020

V. DISSEMINATION:

Description:

Over the course of the project we will have frequent opportunities to document the accomplishments of Bird City communities publically.

- Public meetings: As each community moves through the process from inquiry to application to recognition, Audubon or a local partner will speak at one or more public meetings, usually City Council, which are typically televised.
- Earned media: As each community is recognized we will work with the contacts locally to put out a press release. Each community will also adopt a resolution recognizing International Migratory Bird Day on the day of their choice and hold a celebration. This milestone is also an opportunity for a press release, articles and news stories.
- Recognition events: Official recognition of Bird City communities often takes place at a public event such as a birding celebration or a public meeting such as City Council. A Bird City representative will summarize the accomplishments of the community in their efforts to create habitat, reduce threats and engage people and community officials will be presented with recognition materials.
- Webpages: We will also host updates on our webpage: mn.audubon.org and each community will be recognized on a map with details of their accomplishments. The actions of each community and, in many cases, the materials and resources they create will be available to assist others.
- Newsletters and social media: We will write about the project, the communities and their accomplishments in Audubon Minnesota's monthly on-line newsletter, in our quarterly print newsletter and on our social media outlets such as Facebook and twitter.

Status as of 30 April 2018:

Status as of 31 October 2018:

Status as of 30 April 2019:

Status as of 31 October 2019:

Status as of 30 April 2020:

Final Report Summary: 15 August 2020

VI. PROJECT BUDGET SUMMARY:

A. Preliminary ENRTF Budget Overview:

***This section represents an overview of the preliminary budget at the start of the project. It will be reconciled with actual expenditures at the time of the final report.**

Budget Category	\$ Amount	Overview Explanation
Personnel:	\$ 226,500	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Joanna Eckles - Project Manager \$53,700 (75% salary, 25% benefits; 25% FTE for each year of 3 years) ▪ New Program Coordinator \$156,900 (75% salary, 25% benefits; 100% FTE for each year of 3 years) ▪ Sue Swanson - administrative support \$5,500 (75% salary, 25% benefits; 3% FTE for each year of 3 years) ▪ Ashley Peters – communications support \$10,400 (75% salary, 25% benefits; 5% FTE for each year of 3 years).
Professional/Technical/Service Contracts:	\$28,300	Website consultation / design \$15,000; DNR Birding Tourism Workshops \$12,000; DNR Educator Training \$1,300
Equipment/Tools/Supplies:	\$13,200	Bird City recognition, support, education materials and supplies.
Printing:	\$	
Travel Expenses in MN:	\$ 12,000	Lodging and travel based on Commission Plan
Other:	\$	
TOTAL ENRTF BUDGET:	\$280,000	

Explanation of Use of Classified Staff: N/A

Explanation of Capital Expenditures Greater Than \$5,000: N/A

Total Number of Full-time Equivalents (FTE) Directly Funded with this ENRTF Appropriation: 3.99

Total Number of Full-time Equivalents (FTE) Estimated to Be Funded through Contracts with this ENRTF Appropriation: N/A

B. Other Funds:

Source of Funds	\$ Amount Proposed	\$ Amount Spent	Use of Other Funds
Non-state			
The Saint Paul Foundation	\$20,000	\$	Funding for development of light pollution reduction programs and tools.
State	\$	\$	
	\$	\$	
TOTAL OTHER FUNDS:	\$	\$	

VII. PROJECT STRATEGY:

A. Project Partners:

Audubon Minnesota, up to 12 Audubon chapters in Minnesota, Minnesota DNR Non-game wildlife program, Conservation Minnesota

Partners receiving ENRTF funding

- (Audubon Minnesota - \$226,500) Joanna Eckles - Bird-friendly Communities Project Manager will lead the project. A program coordinator (new) will develop resources and travel statewide to promote and assist communities. Sue Swanson - Office / Finance Manager and Ashley Peters – Communications Manager will assist with financial management and dissemination of project information respectively.
- (Minnesota DNR - \$13,300) Carrol Henderson and Jan Welsh will collaborate to assist with implementation of tourism workshops and implementation of Flying Wild workshops for leaders / educators in participating and potential communities.
- (A Contracted Entity - \$15,000) will develop a website / online system for Bird City management – education, application, renewal, tracking and recognition.

Partners NOT receiving ENRTF funding

- The Red Wing Audubon chapter (Board & members) will work with the City of Redwing as a potential pilot city
- 11 other Audubon chapters (Board & members) throughout the state will work locally to promote and implement Bird City program as opportunities arise
- Conservation Minnesota (Community Conservation Coordinators) and Explore Minnesota Tourism (Christine Lawton, Colleen Tollefson) will help promote Bird City Minnesota throughout the state.

B. Project Impact and Long-term Strategy:

C. Funding History:

Funding Source and Use of Funds	Funding Timeframe	\$ Amount
National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) 5 Star and Urban Waters (NFWF \$50,000, Audubon and partner match \$50,000)	2015-2017	\$100,000

VIII. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS:

- The project is for 3 years; to begin on July 1, 2017, and end on June 30, 2020.
- Periodic project status update reports will be submitted April 30 and October 31 of each year.
- A final report and associated products will be submitted by August 15, 2020.

IX. VISUAL COMPONENT or MAP(S):

X. FEE TITLE ACQUISITION/CONSERVATION EASEMENT/RESTORATION REQUIREMENTS:

A. Parcel List: DOES NOT APPLY

B. Acquisition/Restoration Information:

Fee Title Acquisition DOES NOT APPLY

Conservation Easement Acquisition DOES NOT APPLY

Restoration DOES NOT APPLY

**Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund
M.L. 2017 Project Budget**



Project Title: Bird City – Education for lasting conservation

Legal Citation: *Fill in your project's legal citation from the appropriation language - this will occur after the 2017 legislative session.*

Project Manager: Joanna Eckles

Organization: Audubon Minnesota

M.L. 2017 ENRTF Appropriation: \$280,000

Project Length and Completion Date: 3 Years, June 30, 2020

Date of Report: *Fill in the date of report submission (this will be updated for each status update report)*

ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES TRUST FUND BUDGET	Activity 1 Budget	Amount Spent	Activity 1 Balance	Activity 2 Budget	Amount Spent	Activity 2 Balance	TOTAL BUDGET	TOTAL BALANCE
BUDGET ITEM	<i>Engage and enroll 40-60 communities statewide in Bird City Minnesota</i>			<i>Implement projects to improve habitat, protect birds and involve citizens</i>				
Personnel (Wages and Benefits)	\$97,560		\$97,560	\$128,940		\$128,940	\$226,500	\$226,500
Joanna Eckles - Project Manager \$53,700 (75% salary, 25% benefits; 25% FTE for each year of 3 years)								
New Program Coordinator \$156,900 (75% salary, 25% benefits; 100% FTE for each year of 3 years)								
Sue Swanson - administrative support \$5,500 (75% salary, 25% benefits; 3% FTE for each year of 3 years)								
Ashley Peters – communications support \$10,400 (75% salary, 25% benefits; 5% FTE for each year of 3 years).								
Professional/Technical/Service Contracts								
Website consultation / design \$15,000. An RFP will be issued to create online platform for communities to apply, renew and access information, materials and resources.	\$15,000		\$15,000				\$15,000	\$15,000
Minnesota DNR - 10 Birding Tourism Workshops at \$1200 each = \$12,000 total				\$12,000		\$12,000	\$12,000	\$12,000
educators in Bird City Communities (~\$26 per educator) = \$1,300 total				\$1,300		\$1,300	\$1,300	\$1,300
Equipment/Tools/Supplies								

Bird City recognition (estimated ~\$200 per community for 2 highway signs, one flag and one plaque x 60 communities) plus ~\$20 each for support and education materials and supplies such as books, materials (ex. window collision reduction & cats indoors brochures, native plant guides, bi-lingual birding guides) total \$220 per community for 60 communities = \$13,200 total	\$13,200		\$13,200				\$13,200	\$13,200
Travel expenses in Minnesota								
Lodging and travel based on Commission Plan: In-state travel to promote and visit Bird Cities (~11,000 miles annually) with 30 visits to potential and participating communities (1/2 within 50 mi, 1/4 within 150 mi and the remaining 1/4 within 300 mi) - estimate \$12,000 total	\$6,000		\$6,000	\$6,000		\$6,000	\$12,000	\$12,000
COLUMN TOTAL	\$131,760	\$0	\$131,760	\$148,240	\$0	\$148,240	\$280,000	\$280,000

Bird City – Education for lasting conservation

WHAT? Through Bird City, Audubon Minnesota guides civic and government leaders to increase habitat, reduce threats to birds and engage people in conservation

WHY?

- Wildlife habitat is being severely degraded
- People are increasingly disconnected with nature
- Birds are an ideal focus for conservation and education
- Our best access to people creating change is through their local communities

GOALS and OUTCOMES:



40-60 Minnesota communities statewide by 2020



Leveraging the power of local government by guiding and supporting at least **400 staff** and **400,000 citizens** to:



Improve habitat for birds and other wildlife by:

- Adding native plants to city parks and at home
- Removing invasive species in prairies, woods and wetlands
- Adopting bird and pollinator friendly policies



Reduce threats to birds by:

- Reducing window collisions and light pollution
- Keeping cats indoors
- Reducing and revising chemical / pesticide use



Engage citizens by:

- Getting them involved in restoration and bird monitoring
- Creating accessible trails, youth birding clubs and multi-lingual birding resources
- Celebrating birds together at one or more public events annually

LONG-TERM, through the Bird City program, Audubon Minnesota and our partners will:

- Maintain and restore a healthy, biodiverse natural environment
- Create highly effective, locally led partnerships focused on conservation and community engagement
- Contribute to nurturing a long-lasting, action-based conservation ethic

Audubon



BIRD CITY
MINNESOTA



MAKING communities healthier for people, birds and other wildlife