



Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund

M.L. 2020 Approved Work Plan

General Information

ID Number: 2020-051

Staff Lead: Michael Varien

Date this document submitted to LCCMR: August 19, 2021

Project Title: Pollinator Habitat Creation Along The Urban Mississippi River

Project Budget: \$129,000

Project Manager Information

Name: Lisa Mueller

Organization: Friends of the Mississippi River

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Project Reporting

Date Work Plan Approved by LCCMR: August 20, 2021

Reporting Schedule: February 1 / August 1 of each year.

Project Completion: July 31, 2025

Final Report Due Date: September 14, 2025

Legal Information

Legal Citation: M.L. 2021, First Special Session, Chp. 6, Art. 5, Sec. 2, Subd. 08j

Appropriation Language: \$129,000 the second year is from the trust fund to the commissioner of natural resources for an agreement with Friends of the Mississippi River to remove invasive plants and replace them with high-value native species at three urban sites along the Mississippi River to improve habitat for pollinators and other wildlife. This appropriation is available until June 30, 2026, by which time the project must be completed and final products delivered.

Appropriation End Date: June 30, 2026

Narrative

Project Summary: This project creates 26.5 acres of diverse pollinator and wildlife habitat at three sites within the Mississippi River corridor in the Twin Cities urban core.

Describe the opportunity or problem your proposal seeks to address. Include any relevant background information.

This is a re-submission of our 2020 proposal under the same name. Changes made to this from the pending tentative recommendation are changing the end-date by a year later, changing Milestones by a year, and rounding total request to nearest thousand (+\$703 to Supplies).

As pollinator and wildlife habitat is lost across the state and country, research increasingly indicates the value even small acres of native vegetation in urban areas can provide. These areas can be critical habitat for pollinators, birds and other wildlife when they contain native vegetation and are strategically located (Baldock et al. 2019; Narango et al. 2018). However, urban open spaces are increasingly degraded by non-native invasive species and a lack of native vegetation. Under these conditions, they cannot provide habitat for native pollinators whose populations are in decline. All the project sites in this proposal are located within two strategic corridors: The Mississippi National River and Recreation Area, and the Metro Conservation Corridors.

This project is a partnership between FMR, the City of Inver Grove Heights, Longfellow Community Council and the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board to restore habitat in three natural areas with a focus on using native plants that are important for pollinators.

What is your proposed solution to the problem or opportunity discussed above? i.e. What are you seeking funding to do? You will be asked to expand on this in Activities and Milestones.

The entire 7-acre River Heights Park in Inver Grove Heights will be restored to native prairie and pollinator-friendly shrubs. In the Mississippi River Gorge, 17 new acres of forest adjacent to the river will be enhanced, adding to the 10 acres that were previously enhanced immediately to the south. At Ole Olson Park in north Minneapolis, 2 acres of new riverfront prairie will be added to 2 previously restored acres. By expanding upon previous restoration efforts and adding new sites, this project helps create contiguous, high-quality habitat for wildlife and limits further invasive encroachment.

FMR staff will manage and oversee all aspects of the project including adaptive management. Local ecotype native plant material will be used, including diverse seed mixes (minimum 35 species) and species for resiliency. Staff will evaluate restoration results using the LCCMR's restoration monitoring protocol. Previous three-year restoration projects have revealed that five years of initial funded efforts improve the chance of project success and help ensure that projects reach a maintenance stage that require only minimal effort going forward.

What are the specific project outcomes as they relate to the public purpose of protection, conservation, preservation, and enhancement of the state's natural resources?

This project creates 26.5 acres of diverse habitat within the Mississippi River corridor in the Twin Cities urban core. This builds upon previous restoration work FMR has done within the Gorge and at Ole Olson Park by restoring additional contiguous acres. River Heights Park is a new restoration. Invasive plants will be removed at all sites and native vegetation planted and seeded. All sites are surrounded by a heavily populated urban area and offer the opportunity to inform people using these spaces about the value of restoring habitat, providing for pollinators, and creating climate change resilient natural areas.

Project Location

What is the best scale for describing where your work will take place?

Region(s): Metro

What is the best scale to describe the area impacted by your work?

Region(s): Metro

When will the work impact occur?

During the Project and In the Future

Activities and Milestones

Activity 1: Minneapolis Prairie Restoration – Ole Olson Park; Minneapolis Forest Enhancement – Mississippi Gorge Regional Park - Sand Flats; Prairie Restoration – River Heights Park

Activity Budget: \$129,000

Activity Description:

At Ole Olson Park in north Minneapolis, 2 acres of new riverfront prairie will be added to 2 previously restored acres. This project helps create contiguous, high-quality habitats for wildlife and limits further invasive encroachment by expanding upon previous restoration efforts and adding new sites. Activities include: non-native/invasive herbaceous and woody plant removal and treatment, silt fence installation for erosion-prone areas, seeding with 35+ native prairie species, mowing, and prescribed burning. Using in-kind support, FMR will organize community volunteers to assist with restoration efforts.

At the 17 acres in the Mississippi River Gorge, FMR will enhance 17 new acres of floodplain forest adjacent to the river, adding to the 10 acres that FMR previously enhanced immediately to the south. Activities include non-native/invasive herbaceous and woody plant removal and treatment, seeding, planting native trees and shrubs. Using in-kind support, FMR will organize volunteer stewardship events to assist with enhancement activities.

FMR will restore the entire 7.5-acre River Heights Park in Inver Grove Heights to native prairie and pollinator-friendly shrubs. Activities include: removal of invasive woody plants, seeding to native prairie, prescribed burns, and mowing.

Activity Milestones:

Description	Completion Date
Removal of invasive woody vegetation on 7.5 acres 6/30/2022	June 30, 2022
Removal of invasive woody vegetation on 7.5 acres	June 30, 2022
Removal of invasive woody and herbaceous vegetation/seeding	October 31, 2022
Removal of invasive woody and herbaceous vegetation/seeding of native prairie mix	November 30, 2022
Establishment mows and spot spraying	June 30, 2024
Plant 300 native trees and shrubs	June 30, 2024
Prescribed burn and seeding of native prairie mix/plant 20 pollinator shrubs	June 30, 2024
Prescribed burn on 2 acres and supplemental seeding	June 30, 2025
Mow grassland 4 times and conduct 2nd prescribed burn	June 30, 2025

Project Partners and Collaborators

Name	Organization	Role	Receiving Funds
Jeremy Barrick	Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board	Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board will support volunteer events with in-kind labor	No
Emily Green	Longfellow Community Council	The Longfellow Community Council (for Sand Flats) will support volunteer activities through match funding and volunteer recruitment	No
Brian Swboda	City of Inver Grove Heights	City of Inver Grove Heights will assist with invasive woody removal and support for volunteer activities	No
Neighborhood volunteers	Neighborhood volunteers	Local community of volunteers is highly engaged and will assist restoration and monitoring efforts	No

Dissemination

Describe your plans for dissemination, presentation, documentation, or sharing of data, results, samples, physical collections, and other products and how they will follow ENRTF Acknowledgement Requirements and Guidelines.

FMR will seek to promote and disseminate information about this project through earned media, FMR's website (www.FMR.org), electronic & printed newsletters, and volunteer stewardship events. FMR will acknowledge ENRTF in all publications and events that refer to these projects. FMR will work with landowners to erect signage where ENRTF grant funds are spent. See examples under optional attachments.

Long-Term Implementation and Funding

Describe how the results will be implemented and how any ongoing effort will be funded. If not already addressed as part of the project, how will findings, results, and products developed be implemented after project completion? If additional work is needed, how will this be funded?

FMR strategically focuses on areas within designated conservation corridors. We stay engaged with projects, landowners, partners and communities, ensuring continuous improvement and expansion of the habitat values at these sites, while protecting the public investment. FMR will continue to partner with the City of Inver Grove Heights, the Longfellow Community Council and the Minneapolis Park Board to maintain the restorations. FMR's stewardship program also engages local community members in the restoration process, creating community support for site maintenance.

Other ENRTF Appropriations Awarded in the Last Six Years

Name	Appropriation	Amount Awarded
Metro Conservation Corridors Phase VIII - Prairie, Forest, and Savanna Restoration in Greater Metropolitan Area	M.L. 2015, Chp. 76, Sec. 2, Subd. 08e	\$276,000
Mississippi and Vermillion River Restoration of Prairie, Savanna, and Forest Habitat - Phase Ten	M.L. 2017, Chp. 96, Sec. 2, Subd. 08h	\$213,000

Budget Summary

Category / Name	Subcategory or Type	Description	Purpose	Gen. Ineligible	% Benefits	# FTE	Classified Staff?	\$ Amount
Personnel								
Ecologists		Directing/Overseeing Project Implementation			16%	0.25		\$26,420
Accountant		Manages financial reports and invoices for the grant.			16%	0.25		\$246
Volunteer Coordinator		Oversees the work of volunteer stewards at project sites.			16%	0.25		\$750
							Sub Total	\$27,416
Contracts and Services								
TBD	Professional or Technical Service Contract	Multiple vendors to provide restoration services such as prescribed burns, soil prep., seeding, woody and exotic plant removal, herbicide application, etc. (Vendor contracts will be awarded on a competitive and performance basis).				0		\$78,895
							Sub Total	\$78,895
Equipment, Tools, and Supplies								
	Tools and Supplies	Plant material (trees, shrubs, seed)	for seeding and planting on restored acres					\$21,090
							Sub Total	\$21,090
Capital Expenditures								
							Sub Total	-
Acquisitions and Stewardship								
							Sub Total	-
Travel In Minnesota								
	Miles/ Meals/ Lodging	Mileage	Mileage (103 trips for 3 sites over 5 years)					\$1,599

8/20/2021

							Sub Total	\$1,599
Travel Outside Minnesota								
							Sub Total	-
Printing and Publication								
							Sub Total	-
Other Expenses								
							Sub Total	-
							Grand Total	\$129,000

Classified Staff or Generally Ineligible Expenses

Category/Name	Subcategory or Type	Description	Justification Ineligible Expense or Classified Staff Request
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Non ENRTF Funds

Category	Specific Source	Use	Status	Amount
State				
			State Sub Total	-
Non-State				
Cash	Royal Bank of Canada Foundation	To support restoration at River Heights Park	Pending	\$10,819
In-Kind	FMR Stewardship Program staff	FMR staff organize and lead community volunteers in restoration activities at project sites	Pending	\$27,260
In-Kind	Longfellow Community Council	To support restoration in the Mississippi Gorge	Pending	\$4,000
In-Kind	Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board	Support restoration at Ole Olson and Mississippi Gorge sites	Pending	\$4,000
In-Kind	City of Inver Grove Heights	Support restoration at River Heights Park	Pending	\$5,500
			Non State Sub Total	\$51,579
			Funds Total	\$51,579

Acquisition and Restoration

Parcel List

Name	County	Site Significance	Activity	Acres	Miles	Estimated Cost	Type of Landowner	Easement or Title Holder	Status of Work
Mississippi Gorge Regional Park	Hennepin	When restored, it will add 17 acres of restored floodplain forest habitat for pollinators and other wildlife. It is located along the Mississippi River, within the Mississippi National River and Recreation Area Corridor and within identified Metro Conservation Corridors. There is a dedicated group of community members who actively steward the area and value it.	Restoration	17	0.47	\$44,115	Public		Has not begun
Ole Olson Park	Hennepin	When restored, it will add new prairie habitat for pollinators and other wildlife, and provide natural area enjoyment for the community near it. It will be a valued expansion of the restored prairie already adjacent to it. The site is located along the Mississippi River, within the Mississippi National River and Recreation Area Corridor and within identified Metro Conservation Corridors.	Restoration	2	0.2	\$41,465	Public		Has not begun
River Heights Park	Dakota	When restored, it will be new prairie habitat for pollinators and other wildlife. It is located 0.3 miles from the Mississippi River within the Mississippi National River and Recreation Area Corridor and within identified Metro Conservation Corridors. It is highly valued and used by the community near it.	Restoration	7.5	0	\$43,420	Public		Has not begun
Totals				26.5	0.67	\$129,000			

Restoration

1. Provide a statement confirming that all restoration activities completed with these funds will occur on land permanently protected by a conservation easement or public ownership.

Friends of the Mississippi River's (FMR) work for this project will take place on two sites that are permanently protected and in public ownership. Ole Olson Park is owned by the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board and is open to the public for wildlife-viewing activities. Mississippi River Gorge Regional Park Sand Flats is public land owned by the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board and is open to the public for wildlife-viewing activities. River Heights Park is owned by the City of Inver Grove Heights and is open to the public for wildlife-viewing activities.

2. Summarize the components and expected outcomes of restoration and management plans for the parcels to be restored by your organization, how these plans are kept on file by your organization, and overall strategies for long-term plan implementation.

FMR proposes to create 26.5 acres of pollinator and wildlife habitat in three urban locations in the Mississippi National River and Recreation Area corridor. At Ole Olson Park in north Minneapolis, two acres of new riverfront prairie will be added to the two acres previously restored in Phase I at this site. Work at this site will remove herbaceous and woody invaders and seed the site to native prairie – the historical vegetation community present in the area. In the Mississippi River Gorge, 17 acres of forest adjacent to the river will be restored for pollinators and other wildlife through the removal of woody and herbaceous invasive plants, and native seeding and planting. At the seven-acre River Heights Park in Inver Grove Heights, we will remove invasive and non-native plants and establish native prairie and pollinator-friendly shrubs. At this site, we will also engage citizen scientists to survey pollinators and to track changes before and after restoration.

The project sites have resource management plans already written for them. These plans are stored on a shared server by our organization.

FMR has been strategically focused on specific areas within designated conservation corridors for over a decade. This has allowed us to stay engaged with projects, landowners, partners and communities, helping to ensure the continuous improvement and expansion of the habitat values at these sites, while protecting the public investment that has been made in them. FMR is committed to ongoing restoration and enhancement activities required at these sites over time.

3. Describe how restoration efforts will utilize and follow the Board of Soil and Water Resources "Native Vegetation Establishment and Enhancement Guidelines" in order to ensure ecological integrity and pollinator enhancement.

FMR will use and follow the Board of Soil and Water Resources "Native Vegetation Establishment and Enhancement Guidelines" to ensure ecological integrity and pollinator enhancement on our project sites. Our project incorporates these guidelines in numerous ways, including:

- Sites are selected to be strategic in providing ecological benefits for the landscape in which they are a part
- Sites are selected within identified conservation corridors in order to make landscape connections to decrease habitat fragmentation and create habitat linkages across the landscape
- Restoration efforts will incorporate plant communities appropriate to the sites to provide food and habitat for species in need, particularly pollinators
- Restoration efforts will include methods to restore and maintain species diversity, including incorporating prescribed fire and the removal of invasive plants that displace native vegetation
- Efforts are designed to restore habitat complexes and natural corridors and buffer natural areas
- The restoration of a former farm field to prairie will help retain water on the land, reduce runoff and improve adjacent Mississippi River water quality
- Efforts include removal of invasive species
- The project practices adaptive management with its focus on monitoring and assessing restoration methods and outcomes

4. Describe how the long-term maintenance and management needs of the parcel being restored with these funds will be met and financed into the future.

FMR has been strategically focused on specific areas within designated conservation corridors for over a decade. This has allowed us to stay engaged with projects, landowners, partners and communities, helping to ensure the continuous improvement and expansion of the habitat values at these sites, while protecting the public investment that has been made in them. Starting with individual parcels, our project areas have grown by orders of magnitude to protect and restore large tracts of land, ultimately creating contiguous greenway corridors. The restoration and enhancement project presented in this work program are all part of larger projects both in the sense of time and area. Because of human induced changes in the landscape, natural areas require management. While it is often the case that initial restoration and enhancement require relatively large investments initially, the costs often decrease over time as the goals for a site are met and the project enters a more maintenance level of activity, such as conducting period burns on restored prairie. FMR is committed to conducting fundraising from both public and private sources, for the ongoing restoration and enhancement activities required at these sites over time.

5. Describe how consideration will be given to contracting with Conservation Corps of Minnesota for any restoration activities.

FMR's standard practice when contracting is to always provide the Conservation Corps of Minnesota with our Request for Proposals. We will continue this practice when contracting for restoration work for this project.

6. Provide a statement indicating that evaluations will be completed on parcels where activities were implemented both 1) initially after activity completion and 2) three years later as a follow-up. Evaluations should analyze improvements to the parcel and whether goals have been met, identify any problems with the implementation, and identify any findings that can be used to improve implementation of future restoration efforts at the site or elsewhere.

This project incorporates monitoring and evaluation at these sites. Pollinator surveys before and following restoration will help assess if restoration activities improve habitat for these organisms. Restoration outcomes will be monitored annually for multiple years following completion of the project. FMR's tradition of staying engaged at sites where we do restoration work, results in our being able to assess outcomes for many years following treatments.

Attachments

Required Attachments

Map

File: [452c4ca8-0ac.pdf](#)

Alternate Text for Map

An aerial photo shows the Mississippi River as it flows through the Twin Cities with the 3 sites identified with stars. A photo of the restored portion of Ole Olson park illustrates how the additional acres will look after the project is completed. Another photo shows volunteers pulling garlic mustard in the Mississippi Gorge. A third photo shows River Heights Park and areas overgrown with invasive buckthorn....

Financial Capacity

File: [40555f04-abe.pdf](#)

Board Resolution or Letter

Title	File
BoardResolut2020RFP	3410224d-e23.pdf

Optional Attachments

Support Letter or Other

Title	File
Background Check Certification	aed656cd-374.pdf

Difference between Proposal and Work Plan

Describe changes from Proposal to Work Plan Stage

The key changes were related to adjusting our task completion timelines based on the loss of a year in the grant period. We also reduced staff time contributions by the Conservation Director, Bookkeeper, and Stewardship Coordinator to allow for more time for our ecologists and contractors to complete the work within the shortened timeline.

Additional Acknowledgements and Conditions:

The following are acknowledgements and conditions beyond those already included in the above workplan:

Do you understand and acknowledge the ENRTF repayment requirements if the use of capital equipment changes?

N/A

Do you agree travel expenses must follow the "Commissioner's Plan" promulgated by the Commissioner of Management of Budget or, for University of Minnesota projects, the University of Minnesota plan?

Yes, I agree to the Commissioner's Plan.

Does your project have potential for royalties, copyrights, patents, or sale of products and assets?

No

Do you understand and acknowledge IP and revenue-return and sharing requirements in 116P.10?

N/A

Do you wish to request reinvestment of any revenues into your project instead of returning revenue to the ENRTF?

N/A

Does your project include original, hypothesis-driven research?

No

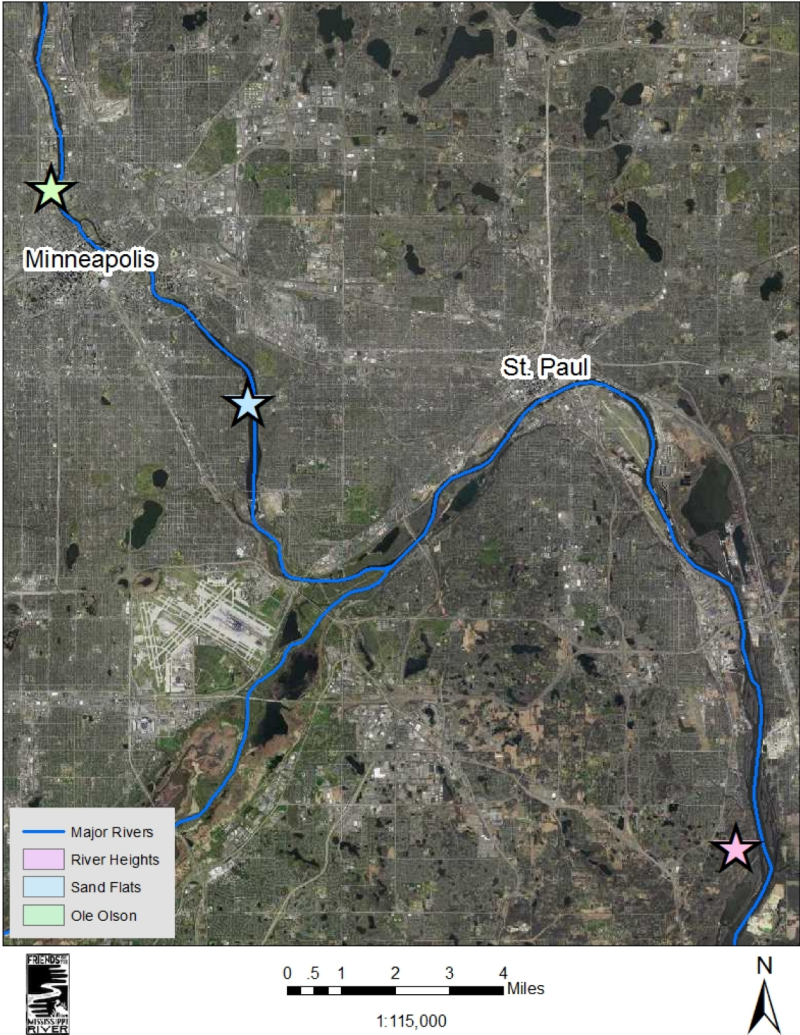
Does the organization have a fiscal agent for this project?

No

Project Title: Pollinator Habitat Creation Along the Urban Mississippi River
Friends of the Mississippi River

26.5 Acres of Habitat Creation for Pollinators and Other Wildlife

2020 ENRTF
Funding Proposal



Ole Olson Park, Minneapolis – Additional restored acres will add to, and resemble, this land restored in Phase I.



Minneapolis River Gorge – This project will remove both woody and herbaceous invasive plants - like the garlic mustard and buckthorn pictured here. Native species will be planted, improving wildlife habitat.



River Heights Park, Inver Grove Heights – FMR will establish native prairie and pollinator plantings, and remove invasive and non-native plants such as the invasive shrubs pictured here.

All sites are within the Mississippi National River and Recreation Area corridor.

Research indicates urban natural areas provide critical habitat for pollinators, birds and other wildlife.