



Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund

M.L. 2020 Approved Work Plan

General Information

ID Number: 2020-078

Staff Lead: Rory Anderson

Date this document submitted to LCCMR: March 15, 2022

Project Title: Restoring Turf to Native Pollinator Gardens Across Metro

Project Budget: \$197,000

Project Manager Information

Name: Maryann Passe

Organization: Wilderness in the City

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Web Address: <https://www.wildernessinthecity.org/>

Project Reporting

Date Work Plan Approved by LCCMR: March 23, 2022

Reporting Schedule: November 1 / May 1 of each year.

Project Completion: June 30, 2024

Final Report Due Date: August 14, 2024

Legal Information

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

Appropriation Language: \$197,000 the second year is from the trust fund to the commissioner of natural resources for an agreement with Wilderness in the City to transition turf to native gardens for pollinator habitat, establish long-term volunteer stewardship networks, and help connect diverse populations with nature throughout the metropolitan regional park system. A letter of commitment from the respective regional park implementing agency must be provided before money from this appropriation is spent at a regional park within the agency's jurisdiction.

Appropriation End Date: June 30, 2024

Narrative

Project Summary: Six to ten .25-acre or larger resilient gardens throughout the metropolitan regional parks system will be planned, planted, and maintained involving stewardship volunteers, including underserved populations

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

The environmental problem we are proposing to address is the decline in high-quality habitat for critical pollinators, which has led to our pollinator crisis. Here in the metro region we have a Nature-based regional parks system which was wisely established by the legislature to preserve and protect the highest quality natural areas in the metro region. Ironically, over the course of several decades, extensive areas throughout this nature-based parks system have been transitioned into mowed turf, at times imitating the landscape of a soccer field complex. Turf lawns, while welcoming for our bare feet, provides virtually no habitat for pollinators and other animals and plants that are required for a healthy, diverse ecosystem. In fact, these lawns can do substantial harm to the environment. The enemy of Bees Butterflies and Birds shouldn't be our Nature-based regional parks - these places should be their safe havens -- and this is where we see an critical and timely opportunity throughout expansive lawns of the regional parks system.

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

Our project will increase habitat in the metro area using the best available science to transition ecologically degrading turf into pollinator friendly habitat in the form of resilient native gardens. In addition the gardens will serve to engage, educate and inspire people of all backgrounds to take on similar projects in their own yards or local parks. In other words, each of the ten gardens will serve as "seeds" for future gardens outside regional park boundaries, resulting in increased high quality pollinator habitat throughout the metro region.

For our project, we will partner with up to ten regional park agencies, native landscape professionals and ecological consultants, to restore turf lawns at regional parks throughout the metro area with native flora and fauna to attract bees, butterflies, birds, and other wildlife. Establishment of these interactive and inspiring gardens will be based on the best available science and will be strategically placed in highly visible locations to improve the ecology of the park and also to enrich visitor experiences. Additionally, we will engage diverse communities to be part of the planting and ongoing stewardship events for these gardens.

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?

Specifically, our project will increase in high quality pollinator habitat throughout the metro region. Additional benefits include:

- Informed public will more likely support initiatives and policies to improve habitat
- Engages underserved populations and helps to build awareness of regional parks (which is #1 barrier to visitation)
- Creating communities of stewards for ongoing care of the gardens.
- Immerses kids in a natural setting and thereby establishing roots for future environmental stewards

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: Site-Planning for six to ten .25-acre (minimum) Pollinator Gardens with Regional Park Agencies and Native Landscape Professional Services.

Activity Budget: \$45,800

Activity Description:

Starting in Dakota County, we will work with up to ten regional park agencies on garden site selection and, in consultation with native landscape professionals, determine native plant selection, areas for wildlife and bird concentration, bee-lawn alternative turfs, and/or edible plants.

Park agencies: Anoka Co, Carver Co, Dakota Co, Scott Co, Washington Co, City of Bloomington, Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board, City of Saint Paul and Ramsey Co, and Three Rivers Park District.

Through RFP, contract for professional services, including with Conservation Corp MN, for site prep including hydrology review, soil, geology, topography and other relevant factors that will provide the best chance for long-term success and durability of the restoration project.

Activity Milestones:

Description	Completion Date
3 garden sites selected in coordination with Regional Park Agencies and native landscape designers	April 30, 2022
5 garden sites selected in coordination with Regional Park Agencies and native landscape designers	April 30, 2023
2 garden sites selected in coordination with Regional Park Agencies and native landscape designers	April 30, 2024

Activity 2: Public Engagement and Underserved Community Outreach Plans for Planting and Maintaining Pollinator Gardens

Activity Budget: \$30,000

Activity Description:

Develop a public engagement and underserved community outreach plan. Build a volunteer database for each garden and use various communication channels (local bulletin boards, social media, personal outreach, etc.) to establish engaged volunteers to help plan, plant, and maintain each garden.

Activity Milestones:

Description	Completion Date
For 3 gardens, develop and implement a community outreach plan and build a volunteer database.	May 31, 2022
For 5 gardens, develop and implement community outreach plans and build volunteer databases.	May 31, 2023
For 2 gardens, develop and implement community outreach plans and build volunteer databases.	May 31, 2024

Activity 3: Community Pollinator Garden Planting Event and Garden Volunteer Network Established and Database Built

Activity Budget: \$67,000

Activity Description:

Each project will culminate in a community pollinator garden planting event, including planting thousands of purchased native grasses and forbs. Public awareness and involvement, in an effort to engage diverse and underserved populations, will be facilitated through multiple lines of communication and outreach to local community leaders.

To help ensure ongoing community involvement, a garden volunteer database will track project participation and build a network of ongoing garden maintenance and greater park conservation support.

Activity Milestones:

Description	Completion Date
3 regional park pollinator garden volunteer planting events completed.	September 30, 2022
5 regional park pollinator garden volunteer planting events completed.	September 30, 2023
2 pollinator garden volunteer planting events completed.	June 30, 2024

Activity 4: Regional Park "Turf to Pollinator Garden" Project Management

Activity Budget: \$54,200

Activity Description:

Hire project manager to oversee all aspects of projects. Responsibilities include:

- Working with park agency staff to plan and schedule garden projects.
- Hiring native landscape professionals to advise, prepare, and supply each garden.
- Establishing and building garden volunteer networks with specific outreach to local underserved communities.
- Administrative duties such as budgeting and project documentation.

Activity Milestones:

Description	Completion Date
Manage complete implementation of 3 garden projects. Build park agency relationships for next gardens.	December 31, 2022
Manage complete implementation of 5 garden projects. Build park agency relationships for next gardens.	December 31, 2023
Manage complete implementation of 2 garden projects. Evaluate garden project outcomes, determine future needs/plans.	June 30, 2024

Project Partners and Collaborators

Name	Organization	Role	Receiving Funds
Various	Artisan Environments, Metro Blooms	Native plant landscapers to collaborate on design plans for various garden sites and lead community planting events.	Yes
Nathan Almquist	Webknowledgy	This organization will build the volunteer database into our website.	Yes
Various	Regional Park Implementing Agencies	We will collaborate with willing park agencies to determine location and design for gardens, and to coordinate volunteer planting events.	No
Rebecca Rice	Metro Blooms	Metro Blooms will have a project management agreement with Wilderness in the City to manage the garden project. The role will be responsible for all management tasks for the implement of the garden project to meet the grant requirements.	Yes

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.

The Minnesota Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund (ENRTF) will be acknowledged through use of the trust fund logo or attribution language on project print and electronic media, publications, signage, and other communications per the ENRTF Acknowledgement Guidelines.

Additionally, to disseminate to the public information and education about the pollinator gardens:

- Create new Facebook pages and events, Twitter, Instagram and other social media accounts as appropriate to reach the local community for each pollinator garden or use the park agencies' social media sites.
- Print and post announcements, materials, posters, and fliers at commercial and social sites and through local media outlets that reach each garden's local underserved communities.
- Community organizations and other nonprofits will be identified and contacted to help build awareness and support.
- When feasible, coordinate with park agencies to use their existing and appropriate communication channels: websites, facebook pages, other social media, newsletters, and volunteer listservs.
- A volunteer database will be generated for each pollinator garden to gather contact information and track volunteer hours and participation. Email blasts will be generated from this to inform, update, and keep in contact.

For presentation and educational purposes:

- Documentation of the garden planning, volunteering, planting, growing, and results will be done with photography and video.
- Slide show and video programs will be created for continuing volunteer engagement, promotional, and informational purposes. They also will be geared toward the goal of future educational programming built around each garden as it matures.

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 work be funded?

Integral to each Turf to Pollinator Garden is outreach to create long-term stewardship volunteer communities

established with a volunteer database and collectively, these knowledgeable, caring gardeners, together with ongoing regional park natural resource management staff will facilitate long-term garden maintenance with minimal future costs to the park.

Additional grant funding may be sought to:

1. Record and measure garden growth and impact on pollinator populations through time-lapse photography documentation with wildlife and environmental photographer Benjamin Olson.
2. Monitor and measure impacts on endangered, threatened, and special concern species such as the rusty-patch bumblebee.
3. Expand educational programming and opportunities.

Budget Summary

Category / Name	Subcategory or Type	Description	Purpose	Gen. Ineligible	% Benefits	# FTE	Classified Staff?	\$ Amount
Personnel								
							Sub Total	-
Contracts and Services								
Various Landscape Designers	Professional or Technical Service Contract	Conduct site analysis; develop a site plan consistent with highest quality conservation and long-term resiliency in accordance with the Board of Soil and Water resources guidelines; coordinate site preparation as needed; provide plan for ongoing management.				0.75		\$60,000
Webknowledgy	Professional or Technical Service Contract	Contract with Webknowledgy to integrate Little Green Light volunteer tracking software with existing Wilderness in the City website. Webknowledgy built, hosts, and manages Wilderness in the City's website and are the most efficient contractor for this work.				0.3		\$1,000
Metro Blooms	Professional or Technical Service Contract	Work with park agency staff to plan and schedule garden projects. Hire native landscape professionals to advise, prepare, and supply each garden. Establish and manage garden volunteer networks with specific outreach to local under-served communities. Administrative duties such as budgeting and project documentation. Includes travel and volunteer communications/printing				1.5		\$55,600
Metro Blooms	Professional or Technical Service Contract	To act as Wilderness in the City's fiscal agent in relation to the grant.		X		0.3		\$19,800
Little Green Light	Professional or Technical Service Contract	Volunteer tracking and management software. Little Green Light is already used by Metro Blooms, familiar to their staff, and is the most efficient and effective tool for this purpose.				0		\$600
							Sub Total	\$137,000

Equipment, Tools, and Supplies								
	Tools and Supplies	Field supplies including gardening gloves and trowels of up to 100 each will be purchased (not to exceed \$1,000 total); quantities of plugs/seeds will be determined with unique site plans (total allocation \$49,000); interactive displays for education purposes (\$1,000 per garden).	Field supplies are needed for volunteer planting events; plugs/seeds will be acquired for the gardens; and displays will help educate and inspire visitors to the garden.					\$60,000
							Sub Total	\$60,000
Capital Expenditures								
							Sub Total	-
Acquisitions and Stewardship								
							Sub Total	-
Travel In Minnesota								
							Sub Total	-
Travel Outside Minnesota								
							Sub Total	-
Printing and Publication								
							Sub Total	-
Other Expenses								
							Sub Total	-
							Grand Total	\$197,000

Classified Staff or Generally Ineligible Expenses

Category/Name	Subcategory or Type	Description	Justification Ineligible Expense or Classified Staff Request
Contracts and Services - Metro Blooms	Professional or Technical Service Contract	To act as Wilderness in the City's fiscal agent in relation to the grant.	Wilderness in the City does not have the staff or infrastructure to manage large sums of money, therefore, we have contracted with Metro Blooms to assist in administering these funds. ENRTF funds will only be spent for actual costs incurred. This is a single source contract.

Non ENRTF Funds

Category	Specific Source	Use	Status	\$ Amount
State				
			State Sub Total	-
Non-State				
Cash	Webknowledgy	Discounted amount for nonprofit	Potential	\$1,350
Cash	Volunteer Time	200 Volunteer hours @ \$20/hour x 10 gardens	Potential	\$40,000
Cash	Maryann Passe, graphics designer	Design of promotion pieces, 80 hours @ \$50/hour	Potential	\$4,000
			Non State Sub Total	\$45,350
			Funds Total	\$45,350

Acquisition and Restoration

Parcel List

Name	County	Site Significance	Activity	Acres	Miles	Estimated Cost	Type of Landowner	Easement or Title Holder	Status of Work
				-	-	-			
Totals				0	0	-			

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.

All ten of the native gardens will occur on public land throughout the Metropolitan Regional Parks System

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.

Each of the project areas will individually be evaluated to assure restoration plans consider the given soil, geology, topography and other relevant factors. Through this evaluation, native plant professionals will develop a site plan consistent with highest quality conservation and long-term resiliency. Plans will be kept electronically and in print by Wilderness in the City, and available to implementing agencies for their records. Overall strategy for long-term implementation will be ongoing through community volunteer efforts in partnership with regional park implementing agencies and Wilderness in the City.

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.

Every native garden project will readily follow the Board of Soil and Water Resources Guidelines (dated January 2019), including the Pollinator Toolbox, toward achieving the goal for highest quality ecological integrity and pollinator enhancement. Additionally, the gardens will serve to educate people about the BWSR guidelines when creating their own urban native gardens.

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.

Most ongoing maintenance will be provided by community volunteers, including garden clubs. If additional financial investment is required, funding would be requested through the regional parks system as part of their annual maintenance expense.

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

Contracting with Conservation Corps will be considered for all ten projects, especially for site prep stage

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.

Site evaluation will be completed at each garden initially after completion and at least three years later as follow up. The evaluations will include an estimate of visitors to the site and educational programs held at each, as well as information based on the restoration plans and will identify any problems that need to be addressed. These evaluations will help to determine best steps to further expand the native gardens.

Attachments

Required Attachments

Map

File: [b3df46e1-de5.pdf](#)

Alternate Text for Map

Project example images from Lebanon Hills Regional Park (LHRP) 2018 Turf to Garden Project with many volunteers planting native grasses and forbs....

Financial Capacity

File: [63316301-cf6.pdf](#)

Board Resolution or Letter

Title	File
Background Check Certification Form	95ae9c05-513.pdf
Board Resolution	f310cd00-eb2.pdf

Optional Attachments

Support Letter or Other

Title	File
Signed Fiscal Agent Agreement with Metro Blooms	b56a0440-acc.pdf

Media Links

Title	Link
Wilderness in the City Website	https://www.wildernessinthecity.org/

Difference between Proposal and Work Plan

Describe changes from Proposal to Work Plan Stage

Wilderness in the City

LCCMR Workplan updates – 2/21/22 by Maryann Passe

Project Collaborators

1. Added Metro Blooms as fiscal agent
2. Updated Maryann Passe's contact information and Project Manager Qualifications.
3. Project Partner Info:
 - o Added Metro Blooms as garden project manager for Wilderness in the City
 - o Changed Pete Widen at Artisan Environments to: Various at Artisan Environments and Metro Blooms

Narrative

- Project Summary: Changed first word from "Ten" to "six to" ten .25 acre or larger

Activities & Milestones

- Activity 1
 - o Title - Changed to read Site-Planning for "six to" ten .25-acre....
 - o Left number of gardens as originally listed (3, 5, 2)

ENRTF Budget (\$)

Reduced amount to \$45,800.

- Activity 2

- o Left number of gardens as originally listed (3, 5, 2)

- Activity 3

Description: Changed "Public awareness and involvement will be facilitated through multiple lines of communication and outreach to local community leaders will facilitate engaging diverse and underserved populations." to read as "Public awareness and involvement, in an effort to engage diverse and under-served populations, will be facilitated through multiple lines of communication and outreach to local community leaders.

- o Left number of gardens as originally listed (3, 5, 2)

- Activity 4

- o Title - Deleted the word "Ten" in title: "Ten" Regional Park...

- o Left number of gardens as originally listed (3, 5, 2)

ENRTF Budget (\$)

Increased amount to \$54,400.

Budget

- Personnel

- o Deleted the Project Manager position and moved funds under Professional/Technical Contracts project manager

- Professional/Technical Contracts

1. Changed Artisan Environments Landscape Design to "Various Landscape Designers" and reduced budget from \$80,000 to \$60,000 (moved funds to fiscal agent and travel)
2. Webknowledgy – reduced budget amount to \$1,000 and changed description to reflect moving of part of the work to Little Green Light (\$600) and part to project manager (\$4,400).
3. Added Project Manager - Metro Blooms and added \$4,400 moved from Webknowledgy for volunteer database work that will be part of project manager responsibilities
4. Added Fiscal Agent - Metro Blooms with \$19,800 moved from Artisan Environments Landscape Design
5. Added Little Green Light – added budget of \$600 moved from Webknowledgy.

- Travel and Conferences

- o Did not include any travel expenses - those will be part of MetroBlooms Project Management budget (\$200)

- Printing/publications

- o Removed this item - those expenses will be part of MetroBlooms Project Management budget (\$1000)

DISSEMINATION

- Second bullet: added copy to include using park agencies' social media
- Third bullet: took out "Wilderness in the City" as this will be part of Metro Blooms project management responsibilities

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?

N/A

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?

Yes, Metro Blooms