



## Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund

M.L. 2022 Approved Work Plan

### General Information

**ID Number:** 2022-107

**Staff Lead:** Mike Campana

**Date this document submitted to LCCMR:** June 21, 2022

**Project Title:** Engaging a Diverse Public in Environmental Stewardship

**Project Budget:** \$300,000

### Project Manager Information

**Name:** Amy Kilgore

**Organization:** Great River Greening

**Office Telephone:** (651) 272-3989

**Email:** [akilgore@greatrivergreening.org](mailto:akilgore@greatrivergreening.org)

**Web Address:** <https://www.greatrivergreening.org/>

### Project Reporting

**Date Work Plan Approved by LCCMR:** June 27, 2022

**Reporting Schedule:** March 1 / September 1 of each year.

**Project Completion:** June 30, 2025

**Final Report Due Date:** August 14, 2025

### Legal Information

**Legal Citation:** M.L. 2022, Chp. 94, Art. , Sec. 2, Subd. 05d

**Appropriation Language:** \$300,000 the second year is from the trust fund to the commissioner of natural resources for an agreement with Great River Greening to increase participation in natural resources restoration efforts through volunteer, internship, and youth engagement activities that target diverse audiences more accurately reflecting local demographic and socioeconomic conditions in Minnesota.

**Appropriation End Date:** June 30, 2025

## Narrative

**Project Summary:** We will increase community awareness of natural resources through directed outreach and engagement targeting a diverse audience that more accurately reflects the community in which we are restoring natural areas.

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

Great River Greening will engage 1,200 volunteers and 400 youth through strategic outreach and multiple engagement levels, targeting diverse audiences that reflect local demographics and socioeconomic statistics in Minnesota.

Our overarching goals include introducing underrepresented communities to the amenities public lands offer, reducing barriers and demystifying stigma associated with access while cultivating stewardship experiences in a way that provides sustained connections through relationship building, hands-on events, and environmental education. Through geographic focus, local partnerships, and community outreach, we will work together to educate on the benefits of time in nature and provide hands-on experience restoring public lands. These experiences will connect participants with the land and one another while working toward a common goal. Studies have shown time in nature improves overall wellbeing, psychologically and physiologically. Benefits include stress reduction, lower blood pressure, improved immune systems, and more.

We recognize the need to include all marginalized and underrepresented communities in our work. In 2018, poverty rates were highest for American Indian (34%), Black (27%), and Hispanic communities (19%), three to four times higher than the rates of Non-Hispanic White Minnesotans (7%). 529,000 Minnesotans, including 150,000 children, had family incomes below the poverty threshold. (US Census Bureau)

**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.**

Great River Greening will focus community outreach and relationship building on engaging underrepresented communities local to our habitat restoration and conservation work throughout Minnesota. We have been actively growing our focus beyond the Twin Cities metro to include greater Minnesota, specifically communities in the Anoka Sand Plain region, Camp Ripley Sentinel Landscape, Nicollet County, and the Cannon River Watershed. Additional focus will also be made engaging youth and young adults, primarily from BIPOC communities, in our youth engagement work centered in the Twin Cities metro.

To assist with these increased outreach and engagement priorities, we will host a suite of paid internships supporting the next generation of environmental professionals focused on reaching these geographies and underrepresented communities, introducing environmental stewardship topics and health benefits provided by nature exposure. Great River Greening will host hands-on restoration events and educational opportunities on public lands connecting community members to the natural areas in their backyard. All events will be open to all, free of charge, and provide any necessary tools, training, and PPE.

**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?**

Engaging a broader diverse base of the population in environmental stewardship and habitat restoration will provide a tangible outcome, and lasting impact as volunteers and interns are engaged in significant restoration, conservation, and enhancement work on natural areas throughout Minnesota. After participating, these stewards will be more connected to their local environment and carry these experiences with them.

## Project Location

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

Region(s): Central, Metro, SE, SW,

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

Region(s): Central, Metro, SE, SW,

**When will the work impact occur?**

During the Project

## Activities and Milestones

### Activity 1: Engage 1,200 local volunteers through community outreach, public education and habitat restoration events.

**Activity Budget:** \$150,000

#### Activity Description:

A total of 1,200 volunteers will be fitted with necessary protective equipment, tools, and training to participate in hands-on restoration activities successfully. Community outreach will be tailored to better reach a more diverse or historically underrepresented audience. Outreach material will be translated into multiple languages to reflect the community (ex: Spanish, Somali, and Hmong languages) and mailed to target geographies.

Great River Greening will distribute educational handouts on restoration techniques and natural history before the event. Day-of training includes a 'roving presentation and Q&A' with an ecologist on the importance of the work they are doing, the ecology of the site, and the restoration plan. Restoration events will be family-friendly. Participants will take home a boot brush/pick tool to raise the level of invasive species prevention protocol and be provided a healthy snack or meal option to further reduce barriers to participation.

Great River Greening will create and implement an interactive survey display to collect important feedback on barriers to outdoor engagement and recreation.

Demographic data on all volunteers will be collected and documented. At least 90% of the volunteers will be engaged in our outstate programs: a) Nicollet County; b) Anoka Sand Plain ecoregion, c) CRSL

#### Activity Milestones:

Description	Approximate Completion Date
Interactive Survey Tool Created	December 31, 2022
2023 Restoration Events Planning Begins (Spring and Fall events will be held)	January 31, 2023
400 individuals engaged	June 30, 2023
2024 Restoration Events Planning Begins (Spring and Fall events will be held)	January 31, 2024
800 individuals engaged	June 30, 2024
2025 Spring Restoration Events Planned	January 31, 2025
1200 individuals engaged	June 30, 2025

### Activity 2: Great River Greening will provide three paid internships during 2023 and 2024.

**Activity Budget:** \$100,000

#### Activity Description:

Great River Greening will hire six interns who will focus on community outreach and partnerships. One metro-based intern per summer and two outstate interns during the school year in 2023 and 2024. Staff will work with local education facilities to identify students interested in an internship and who would benefit from the experience. Supported by Great River Greening's experienced staff, the interns will each have a geographic focus. They will be exposed to natural resources management and stewardship and increased community engagement reflecting the local demographic and economic trends.

Central Minnesota - Economically disadvantaged communities

Twin Cities Metro - Youth/young adult engagement focused on BIPOC communities

Southern Minnesota - Economically disadvantaged communities

Additionally, the intern(s) will receive career development resources, experience hands-on restoration work, event planning, volunteer training or workshops, and more to gain a big picture understanding of all aspects involved in natural resources restoration and community outreach strategies. We will share internship position announcements throughout a variety of channels across the state as well as through Great River Greening's extensive network of partners. Concluding the internship, each intern will be tasked with sharing a personal testimonial reflecting on the experience.

#### Activity Milestones:

Description	Approximate Completion Date
Research communities and key contacts, networking with outstate and BIPOC community groups	November 30, 2022
2023 Internship Announcements Created	April 30, 2023
Volunteer base has grown 15%, 3 new community or outreach partnerships secured (intern lead)	November 30, 2023
2024 Internship Announcements Created	April 30, 2024
Volunteer base has grown 20%, 10% return volunteers, 5 new outreach partnerships secured (intern lead)	November 30, 2024
Geographic and demographic analysis, volunteer feedback and survey analysis	January 31, 2025

### Activity 3: Youth Engagement

**Activity Budget:** \$50,000

#### Activity Description:

Great River Greening will engage 400 youth and young adults in hands-on restoration, and monitoring activities. Engagement will include classroom introduction lessons; on-site restoration and monitoring; technology; exposure to environmental professionals and their careers, and a no-cost outstate field trip to Sherburne National Wildlife Refuge for metro-based students. Great River Greening will partner with other youth education programs designed to introduce youth (primarily from the BIPOC community) to the importance of environmental stewardship and how they can be involved in caring for our shared natural spaces - now and as future professionals.

This program will raise our demographic service in the Twin Cities metro to reach >20% people of color.

Testimonials and documentation will be collected following each event reflecting on the participants' experiences to ensure we meet their needs and provide a quality experience for all.

#### Activity Milestones:

Description	Approximate Completion Date
Develop strategic partnerships with youth focused organizations and schools	November 30, 2022
Host 2 youth specific engagement events, BIPOC focused	November 30, 2023
Host 2 youth specific engagement events, BIPOC focused	November 30, 2024
Host 1 youth specific engagement event (spring)	June 30, 2025
Demographic analysis, participant feedback analysis, and dissemination	June 30, 2025

## 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.**

Funding acknowledgements will be included in all outreach efforts, social media posts, and reporting on these projects. Acknowledgement will also be provided verbally at in person restoration events. Great River Greening will share information about each event with restoration volunteers and youth engagement on our social media platforms, newsletter, and communications efforts. Feedback and demographic information will be tracked and reported on. This feedback will help us ensure we are meeting the needs of Minnesotans and adjusting as the project moves forward. We will continue to document our successes and lessons learned as we move forward. This project will provide Great River Greening with the foundation needed to continue engaging Minnesotans in environmental restoration.

## 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?**

Ecological and habitat restoration activities are a profound, meaningful, deeply engaging, and rewarding way to interact with the outdoors while gaining an active, working knowledge of habitat and ecology to the point of participation and action. This program will help create an engaged, active, informed community better able to steward Minnesota's legacy. Our post-program surveys show that 95% of volunteers increased their knowledge of restoration and, for youth, 87% are interested in a natural resource-related job. We anticipate returning in ML 2024 and every three years thereafter to support this program if successful.

## Other ENRTF Appropriations Awarded in the Last Six Years

Name	Appropriation	Amount Awarded
Upland and Shoreline Restoration in Greater Metropolitan Area	M.L. 2014, Chp. 226, Sec. 2, Subd. 06g	\$300,000
Metro Conservation Corridors Phase VIII - Enhancing Restoration Techniques for Improved Climate Resilience and Pollinator Conservation	M.L. 2015, Chp. 76, Sec. 2, Subd. 08f	\$400,000
Upland, Wetland, and Shoreline Restoration in Greater Metropolitan Area	M.L. 2016, Chp. 186, Sec. 2, Subd. 08g	\$509,000
Community Stewardship to Restore Urban Natural Resources - Phase Ten	M.L. 2017, Chp. 96, Sec. 2, Subd. 08i	\$524,000

## Budget Summary

Category / Name	Subcategory or Type	Description	Purpose	Gen. Ineligible	% Benefits	# FTE	Classified Staff?	\$ Amount
<b>Personnel</b>								
Outreach Program Manager		Responsible for volunteer recruitment, partner planning, internship oversight and youth engagement.			21%	0.9		\$52,000
Ecologist		Provide ecological oversight at events			21%	0.18		\$12,000
Field Coordinator		On site coordination of restoration activities with volunteers and youth			21%	0.18		\$10,000
Field Technician		Restoration support			21%	0.24		\$10,000
Grant Administer		Mange grant reporting and grant finances			21%	0.12		\$6,000
Intern		3 interns to assist with community engagement and restoration			20%	1.5		\$70,000
							<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>\$160,000</b>
<b>Contracts and Services</b>								
TBD	Professional or Technical Service Contract	Youth engagement and education consultation, curriculum analysis				0.24		\$10,000
TBD	Professional or Technical Service Contract	Translation Services				0.24		\$10,000
TBD	Professional or Technical Service Contract	Bus rentals, youth transportation				0.16		\$7,000
TBD	Professional or Technical Service Contract	Youth engagement speaker stipend - Native Elder or culturally appropriate representative				0.04		\$5,000
							<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>\$32,000</b>

<b>Equipment, Tools, and Supplies</b>								
	Tools and Supplies	Restoration supplies (native plants, seed, erosion matting, etc.)	Habitat enhancement					\$72,000
	Tools and Supplies	Restoration event supplies (sanitation unit rental, gloves, safety glasses, healthy snack)	Event supplies	X				\$16,000
	Tools and Supplies	Youth Engagement Events Supplies (tools, kids gloves, resource books, binoculars, healthy snacks)	Event Supplies	X				\$11,000
	Tools and Supplies	Interactive Survey Tools for volunteer and community engagement events	Event Participant Feedback					\$1,000
							<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>\$100,000</b>
<b>Capital Expenditures</b>								
							<b>Sub Total</b>	-
<b>Acquisitions and Stewardship</b>								
							<b>Sub Total</b>	-
<b>Travel In Minnesota</b>								
	Miles/ Meals/ Lodging		Vehicle mileage to restoration events and to engage with interns					\$8,000
							<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>\$8,000</b>
<b>Travel Outside Minnesota</b>								
							<b>Sub Total</b>	-
<b>Printing and Publication</b>								
							<b>Sub Total</b>	-
<b>Other Expenses</b>								
							<b>Sub Total</b>	-



							<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>\$300,000</b>
--	--	--	--	--	--	--	------------------------	------------------

## Classified Staff or Generally Ineligible Expenses

Category/Name	Subcategory or Type	Description	Justification Ineligible Expense or Classified Staff Request
Equipment, Tools, and Supplies		Restoration event supplies (sanitation unit rental, gloves, safety glasses, healthy snack)	Healthy snack option (granola bar, fruit) at volunteer events. Volunteers will be at events in remote areas.
Equipment, Tools, and Supplies		Youth Engagement Events Supplies (tools, kids gloves, resource books, binoculars, healthy snacks)	Healthy snacks for youth participants while we are in remote areas or missing classroom snacks.

## Non ENRTF Funds

Category	Specific Source	Use	Status	\$ Amount
<b>State</b>				
Cash	Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Funded projects.	Site prep ahead of some events at OHF funded restoration and enhancement sites.	Pending	\$30,000
			<b>State Sub Total</b>	<b>\$30,000</b>
<b>Non-State</b>				
Cash	Great River Greening cash match.	Great River Greening direct expenses required to do the work for this grant.	Potential	\$40,000
In-Kind	Great River Greening administrative match	GRG staff indirect administrative expense to do the work for this grant.	Secured	\$5,000
			<b>Non State Sub Total</b>	<b>\$45,000</b>
			<b>Funds Total</b>	<b>\$75,000</b>

## Attachments

### Required Attachments

#### *Visual Component*

File: [a3329d35-964.pdf](#)

#### *Alternate Text for Visual Component*

Summary of project proposal...

#### *Financial Capacity*

File: [3ea24531-67b.pdf](#)

#### *Board Resolution or Letter*

Title	File
GRG ML2022 Board Resolution Engaging Diverse Public	<a href="#">666d80fa-54c.pdf</a>

### Optional Attachments

#### *Support Letter or Other*

Title	File
Letter of Support - Lower Phalen Creek Project	<a href="#">f7546244-83d.doc</a>
Letter of Support - Spark-Y	<a href="#">a9396fdf-fbb.pdf</a>
Letter of Support - Professor Ahmad, St. Cloud Technical and Community College	<a href="#">e950e111-f86.pdf</a>
Background Check LCCMR Form	<a href="#">19435dbd-891.pdf</a>

## Difference between Proposal and Work Plan

#### *Describe changes from Proposal to Work Plan Stage*

Budgets and scope of some of the activities have increased to align with the added \$100,000 award. Additional milestones were created to reflect feedback from the LCCMR Project Analyst

## 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

# Engaging a Diverse Public in Environmental Stewardship

Environmental Education



**Engage 1,000 volunteers & 400 youth through multiple engagement levels, targeting diverse audiences that more accurately reflect the local demographics and socioeconomic statistics in Minnesota.**

Introduce underrepresented communities to the amenities public lands offer, reducing barriers and demystify any stigma associated with access while cultivating stewardship experiences in a way that provides sustained connections through relationship building, hands-on events, and environmental education.

Diversify the conservation movement by expanding connections and bolstering partnerships that reflect the changing landscape of Minnesota.

- Geographic focus
- Local partnerships
- Community outreach
- Educate communities
- Benefits of time in nature
- Hands-on restoration experience
- Connection to natural areas



Education and Engagement goal is not solely focused on racial and ethnic diversity; we recognize the need to include all marginalized and underrepresented communities in our work.



**Great River Greening inspires, engages, and leads communities throughout Minnesota in conserving and caring for the land and water that enrich our lives.**



# Engaging a Diverse Public in Environmental Stewardship

Environmental Education



## Three levels to engage a more diverse audience as Environmental Stewards

### 1. General Event Volunteer

Engage 1,000 volunteers, targeting a more diverse audience, at public events, private events (for schools, places of worship, civic groups, and others), and coordinated activities such as acorn and milkweed collection.

General volunteers receive

- All necessary equipment and training, such as techniques for native planting or invasive species removal
- Presentation and Q&A from an ecologist on the importance of this work, the ecology of the site, and the restoration plan
- Access to PlayCleanGo invasive species sanitation kiosks
- Volunteers also take home a boot brush / pick to raise the level of invasive species protocol.

### 2. Internship

- Work with local education facilities
- Exposure to natural resources management and stewardship
- Assist in community engagement

### 3. Youth Engagement

Engage 400 youth and young adults in hands-on restoration and monitoring activities.

- Classroom introduction
- On-site restoration and monitoring
- Technology
- Exposure to environmental professionals

