



Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund

M.L. 2023 Approved Work Plan

General Information

ID Number: 2023-212

Staff Lead: Mike Campana

Date this document submitted to LCCMR: June 1, 2023

Project Title: Enhancing Habitat Connectivity within the Urban Mississippi Flyway

Project Budget: \$190,000

Project Manager Information

Name: Adam Arvidson

Organization: Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board

Office Telephone: (612) 230-6470

Email: aarvidson@minneapolisparcs.org

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

Project Reporting

Date Work Plan Approved by LCCMR: June 22, 2023

Reporting Schedule: April 1 / October 1 of each year.

Project Completion: December 31, 2025

Final Report Due Date: February 14, 2026

Legal Information

Legal Citation: M.L. 2023, Chp. 60, Art. 2, Sec. 2, Subd. 08p

Appropriation Language: \$190,000 the first year is from the trust fund to the commissioner of natural resources for an agreement with the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board to enhance and restore habitat in and between urban neighborhood parks and the Mississippi River to benefit animals, plants, and neighborhoods traditionally disconnected from nature and to raise awareness of the Mississippi River Flyway.

Appropriation End Date: June 30, 2026

Narrative

Project Summary: A pilot project that will enhance connectivity within the Mississippi Flyway by linking urban neighborhood parks to the Mississippi River through restoration and implementation of identified habitat corridors.

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

Creating additional habitat in an urban setting is an opportunity to respond to community concerns and to address environmental concerns related to species biodiversity loss, habitat loss, and habitat fragmentation. Throughout the community engagement processes for Minneapolis's neighborhood park master plans and the Ecological System Plan, many people have voiced their support for habitat, wildlife, pollinators, birds, natural and naturalized areas, and restoration. As a result, many new areas were identified in park master plan designs for naturalization and restoration in varying forms. The city-wide Ecological System Plan also adds new habitat corridors that build upon the existing metro conservation corridors identified by the DNR. Minneapolis is blessed with contiguous wildlife corridors along its water bodies—especially the Mississippi River—but the habitat becomes more fragmented as one moves away from these corridors and into the city's neighborhoods. This project seeks to build on community momentum from adopted plans and enhance or create additional habitat for a variety of species, primarily birds and insects. It also seeks to develop additional community support and awareness around habitat benefits and the Mississippi Flyway, which encompasses the entire city.

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.

LCCMR funds would be used to develop and implement a pilot project to enhance habitat connectivity between neighborhood parks and the Mississippi River. This would occur through habitat enhancement in neighborhood parks and potential enhancement of urban rights-of-way through boulevard and street tree plantings. MPRB proposes to create one or more habitat fingers reaching from the Mississippi River corridor into the city's neighborhoods. These fingers would benefit animals, plants, and neighborhoods traditionally disconnected from nature. Identification of the pilot project location options would be guided by data and by habitat corridors outlined in the MPRB's Ecological System Plan. The location will be selected based on where there is greatest habitat benefit, what will be most economical, and which areas have been historically disconnected from nature. Results from this pilot will help MPRB prepare to seek funds to expand this project and implement habitat restoration within the city on a larger scale. With more than 1,000 acres of neighborhood parkland and maintenance responsibility of all the city's boulevard trees, MPRB is well positioned to enhance and expand habitat connectivity throughout the city.

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?

The pilot will result in restoration of one or more areas (fingers) within the Minneapolis park system that will increase the range of available habitat and provide respite for wildlife that utilize the Mississippi Flyway. Additionally, there will be increased community awareness around the city's relationship to the Mississippi Flyway on local, state-wide, and nation-wide scales. The project will also fulfill community promises by implementing features of neighborhood park master plans. Finally, this will be a real-world demonstration of habitat restoration in built-up urban environments, which could result in additional habitat enhancement or restoration projects on more Minneapolis parkland.

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: Identification of Pilot Locations

Activity Budget: \$6,000

Activity Description:

Gather, synthesize, and analyze data on the MPRB park system related to habitat, natural resources, future park projects, master plan park designs, and resident connectivity to nature to identify areas that will provide the greatest benefit for Mississippi Flyway habitat connectivity and for underserved communities. Data sources include: Ecological System Plan, MPRB's Capital Improvement Program, service area master plans, and additional resources as needed for analysis. Partner with other government agencies (City of Minneapolis), non-profit organizations, community groups, and multiple MPRB departments to develop criteria for ranking locations, based on the available data sources. Determine the optimal pilot project location options and communicate results in a report to staff and community members so feedback can be collected and a pilot project location can be selected. Once the location is selected, communicate to staff and the public and transition to construction and implementation.

Activity Milestones:

Description	Approximate Completion Date
Gather and synthesize data / Develop criteria for determining locations	October 31, 2023
Analyze data and develop report of possible locations / Communicate results, ask for community input	February 28, 2024
Select location	April 30, 2024

Activity 2: Construction

Activity Budget: \$145,000

Activity Description:

Competitively hire necessary consultants and contractors to develop a detailed plan and set of construction documents to install the pilot project. Develop communications on the purpose of the pilot and any site related park user impacts to start the public education process around the pilot project.

Activity Milestones:

Description	Approximate Completion Date
Develop Construction Plans	September 30, 2024
Post construction plans for public bid	December 31, 2024
Award construction bid	February 28, 2025
Initiate Construction	March 31, 2025
Construction Completion	December 31, 2025

Activity 3: Public Education and Evaluation

Activity Budget: \$39,000

Activity Description:

Increase public awareness around the importance of habitat restoration for wildlife within the urban Mississippi Flyway. Signage will be developed for the pilot location to communicate information related to the site. It will also highlight the fact that Minneapolis is entirely within the Mississippi Flyway and the importance the flyway has for migratory species.

In addition to on-site information, there will be informational materials available in print and online to more broadly communicate to the public about habitat fragmentation, habitat expansion opportunities, wildlife, and connections to existing habitat corridors including the Mississippi River. These informational materials will be shared through MPRB staff and communication channels as well as partner and community organizations.

Also during this public education phase, MPRB will evaluate the pilot for success on three key measures: public satisfaction, habitat enhancement metrics, and cost effectiveness. MPRB will engage with the public through various means to determine the general satisfaction with the project. MPRB will work with its partners to evaluate the improvement in habitat potential, through surveys primarily of birds and insects. MPRB will also examine the cost realities of the project and examine ways to further streamline habitat enhancement in the Minneapolis park system.

Activity Milestones:

Description	Approximate Completion Date
Develop and install signage on site around this habitat area	October 31, 2025
Develop and share informational materials	October 31, 2025
Project evaluation on three key measures	December 31, 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.

Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board (MPRB) will notify the public about the project for educational purposes on the MPRB website, targeted e-mails, and social media. These notifications and any project summaries or descriptions will follow ENRTF guidelines. On-site signage during construction will notify and educate the public, and will include required ENRTF acknowledgment. Restoration plans and final plant lists and plant surveys will be stored in the MPRB archive, where they will be publicly accessible for research purposes.

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?

Long term maintenance and management will be performed by the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board as part of its overall natural resources maintenance programs. Such activities do include paid staff work, volunteers, and partnerships with nonprofit organizations. Maintenance and management activities are funded by the MPRB tax levy.

Other ENRTF Appropriations Awarded in the Last Six Years

Name	Appropriation	Amount Awarded
Invasive Carp Management Research in Lake Nokomis Subwatershed	M.L. 2016, Chp. 186, Sec. 2, Subd. 06g	\$189,000
Expanding Nature Knowledge and Experience with New Interactive Exhibits at North Mississippi Regional Park	M.L. 2018, Chp. 214, Art. 4, Sec. 2, Subd. 05h	\$500,000
Mississippi River Aquatic Habitat Restoration And Mussel Reintroduction	M.L. 2021, First Special Session, Chp. 6, Art. 5, Sec. 2, Subd. 09e	\$1,800,000
Above The Falls Regional Park Acquisition	M.L. 2021, First Special Session, Chp. 6, Art. 6, Sec. 2, Subd. 09q	\$950,000

Budget Summary

Category / Name	Subcategory or Type	Description	Purpose	Gen. Ineligible	% Benefits	# FTE	Classified Staff?	\$ Amount
Personnel								
Data Insights Analyst / Community Engagement Professional		Compile, develop, and analyze data. Coordinate and communicate with partners and the community. Provide written and graphic information for the production of educational materials.			25%	0.1		\$7,000
Construction Project Manager		Oversee all activities related to preparation of construction plans, and perform construction oversight			25%	0.05		\$5,000
							Sub Total	\$12,000
Contracts and Services								
Graphic Designer to be determined	Professional or Technical Service Contract	Graphic Designer will be selected competitively through the City of Minneapolis target market program (TMP). The graphic designer will be responsible for producing educational materials associated with on-site signage and print and digital media.				0.15		\$30,000
Construction Contractor to be determined	Professional or Technical Service Contract	Contractor will be selected by competitive bid or equivalent and will perform all construction work, as directed by the approved construction plans. Contractor and hired sub-contractors will provide demolition, excavation, grading, rock placement, planting, erosion control, and other construction tasks.				2		\$137,000
							Sub Total	\$167,000
Equipment, Tools, and Supplies								
							Sub Total	-
Capital Expenditures								

		Interpretive signs: 6 signs at \$1,500 each	Provide educational information on project, habitat benefits, and connectivity to the Mississippi Flyway.					\$9,000
							Sub Total	\$9,000
Acquisitions and Stewardship								
							Sub Total	-
Travel In Minnesota								
							Sub Total	-
Travel Outside Minnesota								
							Sub Total	-
Printing and Publication								
	Printing	Printed educational materials (brochures): 6,600 @ \$0.30 each	Provide project overview, educate the public about connections to the Mississippi Flyway, describe park-to-river habitat walking tour.					\$2,000
							Sub Total	\$2,000
Other Expenses								
							Sub Total	-
							Grand Total	\$190,000

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				
			Non State Sub Total	-
			Funds Total	-

Acquisition and Restoration

Parcel List

Name	County	Site Significance	Activity	Acres	Miles	Estimated Cost	Type of Landowner	Easement or Title Holder	Status of Work
Public neighborhood park to be determined	Hennepin	The current pilot site(s) is yet to be selected, though as a neighborhood park it will likely be a turf-grass managed landscape with little existing ecological value.	Restoration	3	-	-	Public	Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board	Has Not Begun
Totals				3	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 restoration activities will occur on land permanently in public ownership (owned by the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board) or within public rights-of-way of the City of Minneapolis, in coordination with that agency.

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.

Components of the restoration and management plan will include a description of current conditions; descriptions of target restoration communities, which would most likely be upland prairie or savanna or possibly wet meadow; a timeline for restoration; and guidance for ongoing management of the restored areas. The plan will be kept both in MPRB staff project files and in the MPRB archive, as well as posted publicly on the MPRB website.

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.

MPRB will fully utilize BWSR’s guidance document. Because part of the project includes the identification of specific pilot site(s), it is difficult to be specific at this time about the exact guidance that will be used. However, the recommended number of plant species will reference "disturbed sites" and be on the high end of that row, because of the likelihood of restoring native prairie, savanna, or forest (“Minimum Recommended Number of Species” matrix, p.8). The project will utilize and source seed as recommended for the project location (Ecological Section 8, Big Woods Subsection).

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.

Long term maintenance and management will be performed by the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board as part of its overall natural resources maintenance programs. Such activities do include paid staff work, volunteers, and partnerships with nonprofit organizations. Maintenance and management activities are funded by the MPRB tax levy.

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

Prior to the commencement of construction activities, the project manager will contact the Conservation Corps of Minnesota to determine desire and availability to perform applicable work.

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.

MPRB staff will evaluate the installation of the pilot habitat fingers after initial construction activity. Those staff will provide ongoing evaluation and management during the course of their normal work with natural areas across the MPRB system.

Attachments

Required Attachments

Map

File: [31f80bd7-3db.pdf](#)

Alternate Text for Map

Map of DNR Conservation Corridors and MPRB habitat corridors, overlain on a suitability analysis for potential pollinator habitat....

Board Resolution or Letter

Title	File
MPRB Resolution 2022-201	fd97ef35-55e.pdf

Optional Attachments

Support Letter, Photos, Media, Other

Title	File
Background Check Certification Form	e60820c4-fa0.pdf

Difference between Proposal and Work Plan

Describe changes from Proposal to Work Plan Stage

Project was recommended at funding level requested. Changes in response to staff comments.

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?

Yes

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?

No