



Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund

M.L. 2023 Approved Work Plan

General Information

ID Number: 2023-229

Staff Lead: Mike Campana

Date this document submitted to LCCMR: June 2, 2023

Project Title: Bioblitz Urban Parks: Engaging Communities in Scientific Efforts

Project Budget: \$198,000

Project Manager Information

Name: MaryLynn Pulscher

Organization: Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board

Office Telephone: (612) 313-7784

Email: mpulscher@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: June 30, 2025

Final Report Due Date: August 14, 2025

Legal Information

Legal Citation: M.L. 2023, Chp. 60, Art. 2, Sec. 2, Subd. 05h

Appropriation Language: \$198,000 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 work with volunteers to collect baseline biodiversity data for neighborhood and regional parks to inspire stewardship and inform habitat restoration work.

Appropriation End Date: June 30, 2026

Narrative

Project Summary: MPRB will work strategically with allies and volunteers to collect baseline biodiversity data for urban parks to inspire stewardship and inform habitat restoration work.

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

The Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board's recent community engagement work to develop a new comprehensive plan, Parks for All, shows that residents have a strong interest in nature and protecting wildlife, and a desire to gain more knowledge about the environment. The MPRB currently lacks baseline biodiversity data for its parks which makes it difficult to monitor the impacts of increased park usage, climate change, or the effectiveness of habitat restoration efforts. Based on the community's indicated interest in nature, their desire to learn more, and the MPRB's desire for biodiversity data, the MPRB sees an opportunity to work with allies and community residents to address their needs and interests and at the same time address the MPRB's need for baseline biodiversity data.

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.

The Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board will work with community allies and volunteers to plan and implement a series of BioBlitzes. BioBlitzes provide participants with an engaging outdoor experience while learning scientific inquiry methods and gaining knowledge about Minnesota's natural resources. The proposed project centers on community involvement in volunteer scientific efforts at various size urban parks.

We propose to:

- Recruit and train volunteers
- Plan and host a series of BioBlitzes
- Collect biodiversity data for urban parks
- Share findings with project participants, park staff, and park visitors

The MPRB's project goals are to develop new allies within underserved communities interested in the protection and enhancement of natural resources, to advance a framework that enables the public to regularly engage with scientific monitoring of park biodiversity, and to deepen partnerships with current park and natural resource advocates.

The MPRB plans to continue BioBlitzes after the grant period ends to monitor changes in parks such as impacts of habitat enhancement projects, the effects of extreme weather events, or impact of invasive species. Ongoing monitoring with volunteers would help inform MPRB land management decisions about invasive species, urban wildlife, better protection of intact native plant communities, or shoreline erosion control.

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?

BioBlitz participants will gain an understanding of scientific survey practices and local biodiversity, get to know new parks, develop a stewardship ethic, and entice people to participate in other community science efforts. The community as a whole will gain a better understanding of their local ecology, will strengthen in-person neighbor to neighbor connections, and similar to how neighborhoods share concerns through the Nextdoor app, BioBlitz participants will learn to use apps like iNaturalist to share nature observations. These experiences will result in a more knowledgeable and informed citizenry who can make better decisions to protect the state's natural resources.

Project Location

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

City(s): Minneapolis

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

City(s): Minneapolis

When will the work impact occur?

During the Project and In the Future

Activities and Milestones

Activity 1: Coordinate community involvement and logistics for BioBlitzes

Activity Budget: \$70,000

Activity Description:

The project objectives are to assure broad community involvement that includes the communities that live near, or frequently visit, selected BioBlitz locations, and to plan a series of inclusive, safe, and meaningful outdoor community science experiences.

- Assemble representative groups to collaborate on recruiting and training volunteers; accomplished with MPRB staff and project coordinator, and by working with existing community allies such as Friends groups, partner agencies, and neighborhood groups; with an outcome of broad community involvement in the BioBlitzes.
- Host a series of mini-BioBlitzes to train volunteers on how to use iNaturalist, field guides, dip nets, microscopes, and other tools; accomplished with MPRB staff, project coordinator, groups and individuals that are community allies. The outcome is trained volunteers ready to engage in the 'big' BioBlitzes, and strengthened relationships between non-profits, allies and government entities.
- Identify locations for 'big' BioBlitzes; accomplished based on intensity of interest within the community, willingness of community to enthusiastically participate in the BioBlitzes, distribution of sites across the park system, and the ability for community science volunteers to discover and engage with a variety of natural features. The outcome will be a representative sampling of urban parks that encourage broad community involvement with scientific experiences.

Activity Milestones:

Description	Approximate Completion Date
1a. Confirm 10 to 15 ally groups to recruit volunteers, promote training events	January 31, 2024
3. Identify 3 to 5 specific locations where the 'big' BioBlitz series will occur	March 31, 2024
2. Host 8 to 12 mini-bioblitzes to train volunteers on apps and field equipment	June 30, 2024
1. Work with community allies to recruit and train 200+ volunteers (ongoing during project)	May 31, 2025

Activity 2: Host BioBlitzes, collect biodiversity data and share findings

Activity Budget: \$128,000

Activity Description:

The project objectives are to host a series of BioBlitzes where a broad cadre of trained volunteers and community allies collects biodiversity data; to analyze the data, share the findings, and impact MPRB decision making.

Hosting BioBlitzes and collecting biodiversity data at urban parks will be accomplished with MPRB staff, project coordinator, community allies, neighborhood groups, trained volunteers, and subject experts. Outcomes will be volunteers that are knowledgeable about scientific inquiry methods, a better-informed citizenry, and a wealth of biodiversity data.

Analyzing data and creating a record of findings for each BioBlitz site will be done with MPRB staff, allies and subject experts to help analyze the data. A graphic designer and/or a videomaker will help develop ways to share findings; the visual record will showcase biodiversity of urban parks.

Sharing BioBlitz findings with volunteers, allies, partners, and park staff will be accomplished and coordinated by MPRB staff and community allies utilizing a variety of means including infographics, social media, videos, articles in language specific newspapers. The outcomes will be a sense of accomplishment for BioBlitz participants, a means to honor the work of volunteers, and baseline biodiversity data to inform land management decisions by the MPRB.

Activity Milestones:

Description	Approximate Completion Date
2a. Data from mini-bioblitz training events is shared on MPRB webpage & social media	October 31, 2024
1a. Two 'big' BioBlitzes each engage 75+ trained volunteers and 200+ participants	October 31, 2024
3a. Findings from two 'big' BioBlitzes are shared with allies, partners, volunteers, and staff	January 31, 2025
1 Host additional BioBlitzes and collect biodiversity data at selected parks with volunteers and other allies	June 30, 2025
2. Analyze data and create a record for each BioBlitz site (ongoing during project)	June 30, 2025
3. Share additional BioBlitz findings with volunteers, allies, partners, park staff (ongoing during project)	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.

Analyzing data and creating a record of findings for each BioBlitz site will be done with MPRB staff, allies, and subject experts. In addition to working with a graphic designer and/or a video-maker to share our findings, youth serving on the production team in the MPRB's Spark'd Studios will develop ways to share findings in a way that resonates with teens and young adults.

Sharing BioBlitz findings with volunteers, allies, partners, and park staff will be accomplished and coordinated by MPRB Media & Communications staff and with community allies utilizing a variety of means including infographics, social media, videos, language specific newspapers and media. The outcomes will be a sense of accomplishment for BioBlitz participants, a means to honor the work of volunteers, and baseline biodiversity data to inform land management decisions by the MPRB.

MPRB will acknowledge ENRTF - through use of the ENTRF logo and attribution language - in project communications and outreach including project print and electronic media, publications, signage, and other communications as per the ENTRF acknowledgement guidelines.

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?

The MPRB plans to continue BioBlitzes after the grant period ends. This project will enable us to develop a successful framework to train volunteers, plan and host BioBlitzes of different sizes, and strengthen relationships with community allies. It will be a collaborative effort to continue to host regular BioBlitzes and we look to embed some of the work into MPRB's Environmental Management work group. The findings will be shared with MPRB Planning, Natural Resource and Asset Management staff to help shape land management decisions.

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
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								
							Sub Total	-
Contracts and Services								
To be determined through RFP process	Professional or Technical Service Contract	Overall project and logistic coordination for BioBlitzes including planning meetings with MPRB staff, allies and partners; volunteer trainings at mini-BioBlitzes; promotion, materials acquisition, BioBlitzes day of event logistics, data analysis, record creation, sharing results, evaluation of project				1		\$120,000
To be determined based on BioBlitz sites, community interests	Professional or Technical Service Contract	This would be a series of small contracts for subject expert entities willing to partner on BioBlitzes, as well as contracts for say a mycological or lepidoptera expert.				0.5		\$50,000
Language translators, ASL interpreters	Professional or Technical Service Contract	In-person language translation and ASL interpretation for BioBlitzes, translation for print materials.				0.24		\$12,000
							Sub Total	\$182,000
Equipment, Tools, and Supplies								
	Equipment	Equipment & materials to support volunteer field work, logistics on event days	Event banners, directional signs, instruction signs, assorted tools to support volunteers at BioBlitzes (this would include items like dip nets, insect traps, field guides, also trail cams, hi-vis vests, project t-shirts for volunteers)					\$10,000
							Sub Total	\$10,000
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								
		Rentals	Tents, tables, chairs, porta-potties, and other to support BioBlitz events					\$6,000
							Sub Total	\$6,000
							Grand Total	\$198,000

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	Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board Environmental Management	Will cover costs of graphic designer and/or videomaker to document BioBlitz findings as well as document participants	Secured	\$10,000
In-Kind	Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board	MPRB staff time to support the BioBlitz project; includes Environmental Education Manager (.06, 2yrs) Environmental Education Lead (.06, 2yrs), Environmental Educators/Naturalists (.4, 2 yrs), other MPRB staff to support BioBlitz events including Asset Management, Forestry, Natural Resources, Permits, Park Police, Recreation.	Secured	\$50,000
In-Kind	Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board	As part of the MPRB's youth employment training program, a teen Production Crew from Spark'd Studios will learn filming and productions skills while documenting BioBlitz training events and the 'big' Bioblitzes, and help share the community's experiences and findings.	Secured	\$52,000
			Non State Sub Total	\$112,000
			Funds Total	\$112,000

Attachments

Required Attachments

Visual Component

File: [f5c2a069-6ba.pdf](#)

Alternate Text for Visual Component

The photo montage of typical BioBlitz activities shows people of varying age, ability and ethnicity enjoying the outdoors in a variety of seasons while utilizing binoculars to look for birds, dip nets to scoop up macroinvertebrates, plus close-ups of a mushroom and a dragonfly....

Board Resolution or Letter

Title	File
BioBlitz Urban Parks	77217088-abb.pdf
signed & dated Board resolution approving LCCMR submission	260eb84b-356.pdf

Optional Attachments

Support Letter, Photos, Media, Other

Title	File
completed background check certification form	7e769b20-747.pdf

Difference between Proposal and Work Plan

Describe changes from Proposal to Work Plan Stage

Our dissemination plan now also includes the use of a teen production crew from the MPRB's new Spark'd Studios.

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?

No