Final Abstract

Final Report Approved on October 20, 2026

M.L. 2023 Project Abstract

For the Period Ending June 30, 2026

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

Project Manager: MaryLynn Pulscher

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Funding Source:

Fiscal Year:

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

Appropriation Amount: $198,000

Amount Spent: $91,587

Amount Remaining: $106,413

Sound bite of Project Outcomes and Results

BioBlitz Urban Parks resulted in eight Big Bioblitzes and 39 mini bioblitzes that engaged 1400 volunteers and nature guides in finding, identifying, and documenting flora and fauna in 11 Minneapolis parks. Participants gained new nature knowledge, created community connections, and contributed to scientific data collection.

Summary of Project and Outcomes

The BioBlitz project integrated Minneapolis residents' strong interest in nature and protecting wildlife, the desire to gain more knowledge about the environment, and the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board's (MPRB) need to collect baseline biodiversity data for its parks. The multi-year series of BioBlitzes provided participants with engaging outdoor experiences while learning scientific inquiry methods and gaining knowledge about Minnesota's natural resources. BioBlitz volunteers learned alongside expert Nature Guides who shared knowledge on tracking, plant keys and identification apps for trees, insects, birds, and fungi. More than 1400 people of all ages and abilities participated in eight Big BioBlitzes and 39 Mini-BioBlitzes in Minneapolis parks, recording more than 9000 observations in iNaturalist. Combined across 11 parks, bioblitzes identified 878 plant species, 495 plant species, 278 bird species, 78 arachnid species, 35 mammal species, 47 fungi species, 13 reptiles and amphibian species, 32 fish and mollusk species, and 2

protozoans. Specific details of the species found in the parks can be found on iNaturalist and the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board website BioBlitz project page.

Volunteers gained an understanding of scientific survey practices, including use of basic tools, became more knowledgeable about local biodiversity, explored new parks and/or got to know familiar parks in a deeper way. Outcomes included strengthened community connections, intergenerational sharing and learning, and new skills and confidence to successfully use iNaturalist to document nature observations. BioBlitz participants are more knowledgeable about Minnesota's flora and fauna, and as result can make better decisions to protect the state's natural resources. Other outcomes include development of a framework that focuses volunteer efforts on scientific monitoring of park biodiversity, and deeper partnerships with park and natural resource advocates.

Project Results Use and Dissemination

The BioBlitz project engaged more than 1400 participants, focusing on Minnehaha, Theodore Wirth, North Mississippi, Nokomis, and Hiawatha parks. Findings from the BioBlitzes can be found on the project page that includes ArcView GIS storymaps, photos of the flora and fauna found and identified, short slide shows of species highlights, plus a link to iNaturalist so review all of the findings. Social media posts were also used to disseminate findings. Sandwich boards highlighting images of animals and plants identified during the BioBlitzes have been displayed at BioBlitz project sites. Photos and project links can be found in Attachments tab.

Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund

M.L. 2023 Approved Final Report

General Information

Date: October 28, 2026

ID Number: 2023-229

Staff Lead: Tiffany Schaufler

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

Project Budget: $198,000

Project Manager Information

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Project Reporting

Final Report Approved: October 20, 2026

Reporting Status: Project Completed

Date of Last Action: October 20, 2026

Project Completion: June 30, 2026

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
3. Identify 3 to 5 specific locations where the 'big' BioBlitz series will occur	March 31, 2024
1a. Confirm 10 to 15 ally groups to recruit volunteers, promote training events	June 30, 2024
1.Work with community allies to recruit and train 200+ volunteers (ongoing during project)	May 31, 2025
2. Host 8 to 12 mini-bioblitzes to train volunteers on apps and field equipment	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
1Host 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	$ Amount Spent	$ Amount Remaining
Personnel										
Program Coordinator		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			25%	1		$90,000	-	-
Program Support - Naturalist		Field staff naturalist to support events, volunteer wrangling, leading small groups, nature knowledge, iNaturalist coach			13%	0.75		$30,000	-	-
							Sub Total	**$120,000**	**$65,041**	**$54,959**
Contracts and Services										
To be determined based on BioBlitz sites, community interests	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	$14,162	$35,838
Language translators, ASL interpreters	Service Contract	In-person language translation and ASL interpretation for BioBlitzes, translation for print materials.				0.24		$12,000	-	$12,000
							Sub Total	**$62,000**	**$14,162**	**$47,838**
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					$10,000	$9,419	$581

			would include items like dip nets, insect traps, field guides, also trail cams, hi-vis vests, project t-shirts for volunteers)							
							Sub Total	**$10,000**	**$9,419**	**$581**
Capital Equipment										
							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	$2,965	$3,035
							Sub Total	**$6,000**	**$2,965**	**$3,035**
							Grand Total	**$198,000**	**$91,587**	**$106,413**

Classified Staff or Generally Ineligible Expenses

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

Non ENRTF Funds

Category	Specific Source	Use	Status	$ Amount	$ Amount Spent	$ Amount Remaining
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	$2,500	$7,500
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	$27,236	$22,764
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	-	$52,000
			Non State Sub Total	**$112,000**	**$29,736**	**$82,264**
			Funds Total	**$112,000**	**$29,736**	**$82,264**

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

Supplemental Attachments

Capital Project Questionnaire, Budget Supplements, Support Letter, Photos, Media, Other

Title	File
completed background check certification form	7e769b20-747.pdf
North Mississippi Regional Park promo	1e93b6af-acc.pdf
Mini-blitzes for moths promo	8fcf3aa4-022.pdf
trifold promo for big bioblitzes early summer 2025	4d844f8b-d23.pdf
promo dragonfly mini blitz august 2025	b2058ae0-a20.pdf
spreadsheet of events April 1 to October 1, 2025	918eb361-1cd.xlsx
spreadsheet of events Oct 2, 2025 to April 1, 2026	542ff7b1-a8d.xlsx
spreadsheet of events April 2 to June 30, 2026	aac64c5d-cf9.xlsx
Nokomis BioBlitz promo	142c842b-2b7.png
2026 Bioblitz promo	4dbac8f8-b54.pdf

Media Links

Title	Link
BioBlitz page on MPRB website	https://www.minneapolisparks.org/activities-events/nature-activities/bioblitz-minneapolis-parks/
FB post for Theodore Wirth Park BioBlitz	https://www.facebook.com/story.php?story_fbid=919098490263495&id=100064900562256&mibextid=xfxF2i&rdid=X23Hnbsz3DCquHm8
Minnehaha Park BioBlitz	https://www.instagram.com/p/C_v7A_fN36h/?igsh=ZGUzMzM3NWJiOQ%3D%3D&img_index=1
Results from early summer BioBlitz at North	https://www.inaturalist.org/projects/early-summer-2025-north-mississippi-bioblitz

Mississippi Park	
MPRB BioBlitz webpage	https://www.minneapolisparks.org/activities-events/nature-activities/bioblitz-minneapolis-parks/
short video overview of BioBlitz project	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l8Z5L5IUj2Q
BioBlitz storymap for Nokomis and Hiawatha	https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/e9237e80670c4306aa0c327d472a1694

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 understand that travel expenses are only approved if they 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, sale of products and assets, or revenue generation?

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

Do you understand that a named service contract does not constitute a funder-designated subrecipient or approval of a sole-source contract? In other words, a service contract entity is only approved if it has been selected according to the contracting rules identified in state law and policy for organizations that receive ENRTF funds through direct appropriations, or in the DNR's reimbursement manual for non-state organizations. These rules may include competitive bidding and prevailing wage requirements

Not acknowledged

Work Plan Amendments

Amendment ID	Request Type	Changes made on the following pages	Justification For Amendment Request (word limit 75)	Date Submitted	Approved	Date of LCCMR Action
1	Amendment Request	• Other • Budget - Professional / Technical Contracts • Activities and Milestones • Budget - Personnel	Contractors originally interested in this project are, for a variety of reasons, not available. We propose to rely on MPRB staff by giving current part-time staff additional hours to focus on the project. They will have a jump start on internal processes and community connections to ensure we meet our outcomes. We recognized the need to continue recruiting and hosting mini-bioblitzes throughout the project timeframe, therefore end dates for 1a and 2 have been extended.	March 28, 2024	Yes	April 15, 2024
2	Completion Date	Previous Completion Date: 06/30/2025 New Completion Date: 06/30/2026	When the MPRB could not secure a contractor to coordinate the BioBlitzes, the LCCMR contract was amended to enable MPRB to increase hours for an MPRB Naturalist to become the BioBlitz coordinator. Staff wages are less than those of a contractor so there are project funds left. MPRB would like to use those savings to extend the project by one year and continue to offer BioBlitzes in Mpls parks.	April 21, 2025	Yes	May 1, 2025

Status Update Reporting

Final Status Update August 14, 2026

Date Submitted: October 2, 2026

Date Approved: October 5, 2026

Overall Update

In the last three months of the project, Minneapolis Parks hosted mini-bioblitzes, a focused iNaturalist training, and two big BioBlitzes which all contributed to the project's intended outcomes. Participants learned about local biodiversity, gained an understanding of scientific survey practices from field experts, explored new parks and discovered more about parks they already thought they knew. They learned about the importance of stewarding natural spaces and how their decisions, actions or inactions, impact nearby nature. Participants learned how to use iNaturalist, met and worked alongside their neighbors for a common purpose, and as one adult participant put it, “I’ve found my people”. BioBlitz participants were uniformly pleased to have helped explore and document the flora and fauna in Minneapolis parks, and many expressed a strong interest in continuing this kind of community science programs. One of the younger participants (about age 9) cried when he learned the Lake Nokomis BioBlitz was the last one scheduled.

Activity 1

Seven mini-blitzes at three different parks focused on animal tracking, birding, tree ID, moths, spring ephemerals, and fungi, plus a general mini-blitz at North Mississippi Regional Park, and an iNaturalist focused training. Big BioBlitzes were held at Lake Hiawatha with 80 participants, and at Lake Nokomis with 103 participants. Adults were introduced to iNaturalist and then explored the parks with Nature Guides. The photos shared in the storymap capture the participants intensity of interest and joy in learning (link in attachments). The project exceeded the initial goal of 8 to 12 mini-bioblitzes - we hosted 37 and the project also exceeded the originally stated goal of two Big BioBlitzes - we hosted eight.
(This activity marked as complete as of this status update)

Activity 2

Since the last update, additional bioblitzes have been held, data had been collected, recorded, and shared with volunteers, allies, park staff, and park visitors. The MPRB project webpage for the BioBlitzes has been updated as has the storymap, and the iNaturalist project page. Sample promotional material for the bioblitzes is included in attachments.
(This activity marked as complete as of this status update)

Dissemination

The BioBlitz project page remains the best source to view project findings via ArcView GIS storymaps, photos of the flora and fauna found and identified, short slide shows of species highlights, plus a link to iNaturalist so review all of the findings. Staff created sandwich boards highlighting images of animals and plants identified during the BioBlitzes at Lake Nokomis and Lake Hiawatha. These boards are currently on site so that park visitors may view the findings and learn more BioBlitzes and the overall project.

Status Update Reporting

Status Update April 1, 2026

Date Submitted: April 20, 2026

Date Approved: April 21, 2026

Overall Update
Each BioBlitz that we host, either mini or big, contributes to our intended outcomes of people gaining an understanding of scientific practices, developing a stewardship ethic, and participating in other community science efforts. In addition, strengthening neighbor to neighbor connections, and for participants to have a better understanding of local ecology and biodiversity. Qualitative data shows we're having an impact, as one participant noted: "it was such a lovely event, with super knowledgeable and welcoming staff, very cool learning and exploration, and a chance to meet other members of the community. It was our first time and we've told several people they should come with us next time!" In the last six months, an additional 154 adults and youth have participated in mini-bioblitzes, with more than 1000 participants overall for the project.

Activity 1
The four fall mini-bioblitzes focused on birding and animal tracking, and the three winter mini-bioblitzes tree ID and animal tracking. The surge of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) in Minneapolis overall negatively impacted park usage and program participation. While MPRB did not cease all programming during the surge, social media posts promoting public programs did not occur. Staff were uneasy about inviting the community to travel or to visit public spaces where we could not guarantee protection from ICE. Program promotion was limited to email to previous participants and partner lists. Despite the reduction in promotion, 154 people participated in the seven mini-bioblitzes. These smaller events provide opportunities for more intensive learning and connection with the Nature Guides. We have exceeded our original goal to host 8 to 12 mini bioblitzes.

Activity 2
The fall and winter mini-bioblitzes involved 154 volunteer citizen scientists at North Mississippi Regional Park, Mississippi River Gorge, Minnehaha Park, and Theodore Regional Parks. Throughout the entire project, participants have identified more than 1500 species in the blitzed parks.

Findings from the BioBlitzes are shared with volunteers, partners, and park staff via updated ArcView GIS storymaps and the website.

Dissemination
The BioBlitz project page is the best source for project information including ArcView GIS storymaps, links to iNaturalist, and photos of the species found and identified during the events. A highlight video of the BioBlitz project has been shared on social media and can also be seen on the welcome screens at MPRB headquarters building and recreation centers (see attachments for link).

Visitors to North Mississippi, Wirth, and Minnehaha Parks may view sandwich boards featuring images of the flora and fauna found during BioBlitzes, plus a QR code to learn more about the project and upcoming events. The signs also include the funding source for the project.

Status Update Reporting

Status Update October 1, 2025

Date Submitted: October 1, 2025

Date Approved: November 4, 2025

Overall Update
Both mini and big BioBlitzes offer participants the opportunity to have a guided experience exploring parks previously unknown to them. BioBlitzes help overcome identified barriers to park use such as the fear of getting lost, fear of wild animals, and not having anyone to go with them to visit a park. Since the BioBlitzes began in June of 2024, more than 700 children, teens and adult participants have learned about local ecology and biodiversity, scientific survey practices, and how to use the iNaturalist app. Working together towards a common goal creates a sense of camaraderie among participants, and the intergenerational component of the BioBlitzes has been an added delight.

Activity 1
Between April 1 and October 1, the MPRB has hosted nine mini BioBlitzes and three big BioBlitzes. Mini bioblitzes, with a specific focus such as birds or animal tracking, have proven to be a means to build a stronger rapport with volunteers. They appreciate the smaller events and the more intensive learning experience with a nature guide.

Our 3 to 5 sites for big BioBlitzes were identified (Wirth, North Mississippi, Minnehaha) and we may add Lake Nokomis as a site in anticipation of shoreline restoration work. We have worked with community allies to recruit volunteers and participants. Not every ally group we hoped to work with had the capacity to make a long-term commitment to the project, but they have been willing to help promote events. The BioBlitz coordinator has been working with the Urban Bird Collective (UBC) to create welcoming space for all communities and to lead mini bioblitzes for birders of all levels. We have exceeded our original goal to host 8 to 12 mini bioblitzes.

Activity 2
As stated above, MPRB has continued to host mini and big BioBlitzes to collect biodiversity data. Most of the milestones in this activity are ongoing throughout the project and focus on sharing our findings. The data is being shared with volunteers, partners, and staff through the website and the ArcView GIS storymaps. Combined, the three big Big Bioblitzes in early summer had 177 volunteer participants and 48 participants as nature guides (that number includes some staff).

Dissemination
The BioBlitz coordinator is working with Communications and Marketing staff to develop short reels about the project that can be shared on social media this fall and winter, as well as making plans for promotion and dissemination for next spring.

One of original goals was to work with a teen crew from Spark'd Studios to develop a short film about the BioBlitzes. This has proven more complex than anticipated so we are reevaluating that method for dissemination.

The BioBlitz project page provides the most details about the BioBlitz project including storymaps, images of the flora and fauna found, and links to iNaturalist. As an example, a link directly to the Minnehaha Park early summer BioBlitz is included in the attachments.

Staff are also sharing info about the BioBlitz project via sandwich boards at the three sites that host big BioBlitzes. The signs highlight some of the flora & fauna found during the BioBlitzes, a QR code to learn more about the project and how to get involved, and also identify the funding source for the project.

Status Update Reporting

Status Update April 1, 2025

Date Submitted: May 21, 2025

Date Approved: May 22, 2025

Overall Update
As intended, BioBlitz participants are learning about scientific survey practices, exploring new parks, gaining experience using identification tools and iNaturalist, and becoming part of a nature-focused community. Participants have expressed great satisfaction in acquiring new knowledge from BioBlitz nature guides including trackers, entomologists, arborists, birders, ecologists, and more.

The BioBlitz coordinator organized winter mini-bioblitzes focused on tracking, tree and bird identification to help volunteers increase their skills. The coordinator is working with partners, like the Urban Bird Collective, to co-host spring mini bioblitzes. The coordinator is also looking for additional 'nature guides' to help fill the gap if federal partners are not able to participate due to current administrative climate.

Overall, there have been 12 mini-BioBlitzes and three big-BioBlitzes (as of the end of March 2025); 267 adults and 113 youth have learned to use iNaturalist.

Activity 1
North Mississippi Regional Park hosted a 'big' BioBlitz on October 14 with 78 citizen scientists supported by 12 nature guides. For volunteers, the highlight of this event was donning hip waders – a first for many – to look for mussels. Volunteers were delighted with their finds (and the names), including Wabash pigtoe, plain pocketbook, fatmucket, and three-horned wartyback.

As requested by volunteer citizen scientists, BioBlitzes were (and are) scheduled to occur in different seasons at the same large regional parks. Mini-BioBlitzes were held during the winter and focused on helping volunteers increase their skills in tracking wildlife, tree and bird identification. Events were held at North Mississippi Regional Park 2/23/2025, 3/22/2025), Lake Harriet's Roberts Bird Sanctuary (3/22/2025), Mississippi River Gorge (4/5/2025), greater Theodore Wirth Regional Park (3/22/2025), and at the Quaking Bog (1/3/2025) in Wirth Park.

Activity 2
182 volunteer citizen scientists participated in 'big' and 'mini' BioBlitzes between October and March. 28 nature guides supported the citizen scientists. Additional events are planned for April 5 with Urban Bird Collective at North Mississippi Park and Marshal Terrace, April 27 at Wirth Park in Eloise Butler Wildflower Garden to learn spring ephemerals, April 27 with Urban Bird Collective at Lake Harriet Roberts Bird Sanctuary, May 2 at Minnehaha Park with spring wildflower focus, and early June (waiting on date confirmations of Nature Guides).

A low percentage of participants have completed after-event emailed surveys, so feedback is being collected in a more informal manner during the BioBlitzes. Staff are recording comments and conversations during the event, and feedback received via individual emails with the coordinator. The BioBlitz project has been met with overwhelming enthusiasm as well as gratitude for the opportunity to learn more about the plants and wildlife found in Minneapolis parks.

Dissemination
BioBlitz findings are continuing to be added to ArcView GIS as Storymaps. BioBlitz participants are invited to join the BioBlitz email list to stay informed about upcoming events and how to view findings on the website.
After much discussion on how to share findings with summer teen workers that participated in mini-bioblitzes, staff will

focus on site specific signage or banners that include QR codes to link to the website.
Promotional efforts for BioBlitzes include ENTRF acknowledgement, and a banner with the ENTRF logo is displayed at all events. The November issue of the Longfellow Messenger included a column by the Friends of Minnehaha Park which highlighted the BioBlitz and ENTRF funding (scan of article is attached).

Status Update Reporting

Status Update October 1, 2024

Date Submitted: October 1, 2024

Date Approved: October 30, 2024

Overall Update
The BioBlitz coordinator continues to build and strengthen relationships with ally groups. A particularly successful partnership is with a new group, the Friends of Minnehaha Park, who helped recruit volunteers and cohosted the September 14 BioBlitz. Staff have been gratified by the wide support for the BioBlitz efforts from partners and allies at various scales including federal, state, local agencies and many nature-based non-profits. In addition to helping promote the events, several have participated in the BioBlitzes as field experts.

The participants have been enthusiastic to explore parks while learning about iNaturalist and gaining new skills using plant keys and field guides, while also getting to try new equipment like dip nets and sweep nets. The feedback from participants has been uniformly positive, with one volunteer from the Minnehaha BioBlitz stating they had an awesome time and the the MPRB should offer more of these experiences.

BioBlitzes have built momentum and we're looking to sustain that interest with late fall and winter mini-bioblitzes that can focus more on tracking, tree identification, and birding.

Activity 1
Mini-BioBlitzes have been held at Powderhorn Park (3), Diamond Lake (1), and Edgewater Park (1), and two 'big' BioBlitzes have been held at Minnehaha Regional Park and Theodore Wirth Regional Park. More than a dozen ally groups have helped promote the events and recruit volunteers, and many have offered up their services as field experts (nature guides) during the BioBlitzes. More than 200 people have been trained on how to use iNaturalist.

We will continue to evolve how the mini-bioblitzes and big bioblitzes occur based on input from ally groups, volunteers, and staff. One of the messages staff heard was the importance of visiting a park site more than once so to participants can gather a wider breadth of flora and fauna data, and feel more confident exploring natural spaces in Minneapolis parks. Another suggestion was to offer bioblitz opportunities specific to BIPOC participants, and to recruit BIPOC scientists and field experts to lead the field data collection. MPRB will be working to make this suggestion a reality.

Activity 2
Overall, more than 200 people (teens and adults) have been trained on how to use iNaturalist, even if they chose to not create an account. Combined, the 'big' BioBlitzes at Minnehaha Park and Theodore Wirth Park had 115 participants which is lower than our stated milestone of 200 participants. However, we plan to offer more bioblitz opportunities than described in our original proposal so we expect to meet and exceed our milestone numbers.

The BioBlitz Coordinator is working with MPRB Communications staff to ensure data collected during the bioblitzes is shared on the webpage and social media before the Halloween milestone.

Dissemination
BioBlitz findings are being added to ArcView GIS, and staff are determining how to effectively share with participants and park goers.

Three mini-BioBlitzes were held specifically for teenagers as part of their summer jobs with the MPRB. This was a new experience for the youth on all three park care crews. During Saturday work days this fall, one of the MPRB's teen work

crews will work with staff to decide how BioBlitz findings should be shared out, specifically targeting youth and teens.

Promotional efforts for the BioBlitzes have consistently included ENTRF acknowledgement. Examples can be found on the Attachments page.

Status Update Reporting

Status Update April 1, 2024

Date Submitted: March 28, 2024

Date Approved: April 15, 2024

Overall Update
Securing a project coordinator is an integral component of our work, and we have not achieved that. When the project proposal was originally written, staff had contacted contractors and several expressed interest in being the coordinator. However, due to various reasons, none are available for this project. Our proposed solution is to rely on MPRB part-time staff to serve in the project coordinator role. The staff would continue to perform their current work and be given additional hours to focus on the BioBlitz project. We have identified qualified staff to fill this role if/when LCCMR approves the proposed change.

While we have struggled with the coordinator component, an internal multi-department team has been meeting to discuss the BioBlitzes. These conversations are identifying opportunities, priorities, defining how data will be used and shared, additional allies, and more. This group is also focused on how the project will shape a framework for long-term community science work in the Minneapolis park system and how to coordinate efforts with existing community science efforts like the Backyard Bumble Bee Count and Frog and Toad Surveys.

Activity 1
Progress has been made on Milestone 3. Three sites have been identified for 'big' BioBlitzes: Minnehaha Park, North Mississippi Regional Park, and Theodore Wirth Regional Park. There is the potential to add another site.

Activity 2
Progress on these milestones will occur this spring and summer, and we will have more to report in October.

Dissemination
This project's dissemination plan is centered on sharing data collected during BioBlitzes, however, we have not hosted any BioBlitzes yet.