

Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund 2009 Phase 1 Request for Proposals (RFP)

LCCMR ID: B15.05

Project Title: MeCC - Grants for Restoration, Acquisition, Easements, and Other Conservation Tools

Total Project Budget: \$ \$2,695,000

Proposed Project Time Period for the Funding Requested: July 2009 - June 2011 (2 yrs)

Other Non-State Funds: \$ 2,480,000

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Sponsoring Organization: DNR

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Region:

Metro

County Name:

Anoka, Carver, Chisago, Dakota,
Goodhue, Hennepin,

City / Township:

all

Summary: Metro Greenways provides grants to local governments to leverage funding to protect and restore important terrestrial and aquatic habitats and assist local governments with other ways to conserve natural habitats.

Main Proposal: 0808-1-028-proposal-MG 2008 MG final proposal.doc

Project Budget: 0808-1-028-budget-Project Budget.doc

Qualifications: 0808-1-028-qualifications-MG quals - MB.doc

Map: 0808-1-028-maps-MCC map Aug 2007.pdf

Project Title: Metro Conservation Corridors

Partner Project Title: Metro Greenways

I. PROJECT STATEMENT

Metro Greenways, through the efforts of its coordinator and matching grant programs, is creating a network of remaining naturally vegetated areas through protection and restoration to counter the extreme fragmentation that continues to occur in DNR's Central Region. Because local governments have ultimate land use authority, the Metro Greenways Program also provides outreach and incentive grants to any level of local government in its 12 counties to generate land cover data and to incorporate natural resources information in local planning, policies, and practices.

In this 2-year phase, Metro Greenways will work within mapped corridors to: 1) protect 500 acres of significant natural habitat; and 2) restore 200 acres of habitat that buffer, reconnect, or augment high quality areas. Because conservation relies heavily on local government action, Metro Greenways will also assist roughly 12-15 communities in achieving more conservation-sound planning and design. Community assistance and grants will be available to all local governments in 12 of DNR Central Region's 23 counties.

II. DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT RESULTS

Result 1: Restore and Enhance Significant Habitat Budget: \$ 230,000

The Metro Greenways Program will award matching grants to local units of government to restore and enhance about 200 acres of significant upland, shore land, or wetland habitat that serves to buffer, augment, or reconnect already protected natural habitats. A request for proposals to the Metro Greenways Program will be issued in 2009 and projects will be selected and recommended for funding by the Metro Greenways review panel based on an established set of criteria. Recommended proposals will need to be approved by DNR's Commissioner and LCCMR.

Deliverable

1. Restore 200 acres

Completion Date

June 30, 2011

Result 2: Acquire Significant Habitat Budget: \$ 2,080,000

The Metro Greenways Program will award matching grants to local units of government to protect approximately 500 acres of regionally important natural habitat through acquisition (fee simple or conservation easement). Special consideration will be on local governments within the corridors with high quality habitat and high species richness, as documented in DNR's Tomorrow's Habitat for the Wild and Rare analysis (2006), and are facing rapid projected growth as documented in DNR and Ameregis' Growth Pressures on Sensitive Natural Areas assessment (2006). The State's Conservation and Preservation Plan habitat assessment will also be used to define "significant" habitat.

A request for proposals to the Metro Greenways Program will be issued in 2009 and projects will be selected by the Metro Greenways review panel based on an established set of criteria. Recommended proposals will need to be approved by DNR's Commissioner and LCCMR.

Deliverable

1. Acquire 500 acres

Completion Date

June 30, 2011

Result 3: Other Conservation Tools

Budget: \$ 385,000

The Metro Greenways Program will select ten to fifteen projects totaling \$300,000 to assist local governments in gathering needed natural resources information to identify sites for protection or restoration and/or to implement conservation measures other than acquisition, restoration, or site management. Metro Greenways will also contract with specialists to facilitate problem solving on key issues or processes that hinder local governments from making sound conservation and development decisions.

Deliverable

1. Grants to 10-15 local governments
to adopt other conservation options

Completion Date

June 30, 2011

2. Organized and facilitated problem-solving opportunities on local-regional-state issues

III. PROJECT STRATEGY AND TIMELINE

A. Project Partners

Interested local governments, special districts, consultants, University of Mn, other MeCC partners (see addendum to overall proposal for list of MeCC partners)

B. Project Impact

The Metro Greenways Program is based on the green infrastructure concept, which is a proactive and strategic approach to conservation that aims to recreate a web of natural lands in developed/developing landscapes. Metro Greenways has built support for conservation among local governments over the years, to the extent that several counties now have their own "greenway" programs or have passed referenda to support local land conservation. Key findings of the DNR-Ameregis report were: 1) there remains a diversity of important natural habitats scattered throughout the region; 2) that these habitats are clearly threatened by our pattern of development; and 3) the fiscal capacity of local governments is highly varied and funding partnerships between the State and local governments, as aided by programs like Metro Greenways, will be essential to future conservation successes.

C. Time

2 years

D. Long-Term Strategy (if applicable)

Metro Greenways in one of several partners in the Metro Conservation Corridor Partnership. The partnership used DNR's mapping of Regionally Significant Ecological Areas to develop its corridor map of focus areas. Because funding for Metro Greenways has declined with time and land costs have dramatically increased during that same time, the Program recognizes that conservation to protect the region's vital natural resources cannot be accomplished through acquisition and restoration alone. Hundreds of local governments need to make better land use decisions that conserve environmentally sensitive resources. The magnitude of the conservation requires a continual refocusing of internal resources as well as incentive grants to assist local governments in their conservation efforts. DNR Metro Greenways staff and operations rely on LCCMR support for one FTE who serves 12 counties and several hundred communities.

Project Budget: Metro Greenways Phase 5

IV. TOTAL PROJECT REQUEST BUDGET

<u>BUDGET ITEM</u>	<u>AMOUNT</u>	<u>% FTE</u>
Personnel: Metro Greenways Coordinator (50% result 1; 30% result 2; 20% result 3)	\$ 165,000	100%
Contracts: Land Use and Local Government Experts to work with DNR Metro Greenways to develop problem-solving and information-sharing arrangements around conservation and development issues	\$ 50,000	
Acquisition (Including Easements): 500	\$ 2,000,000	
Restoration: 200	\$ 180,000	
Other: Grants to local governments (12-15) for other conservation approaches	\$ 300,000	
TOTAL PROJECT BUDGET REQUEST TO LCCMR	\$ 2,695,000	

V. OTHER FUNDS

<u>SOURCE OF FUNDS</u>	<u>AMOUNT</u>	<u>Status</u>
Remaining \$ From Previous Trust Fund Appropriation (if applicable): <i>How much Trust Fund money remains not spent or legally obligated from any previous Trust Fund appropriation for any directly related project of the proposing project, project manager, or project organization? Specify the appropriation.</i>	\$ 0	
Other Non-State \$ Being Leveraged During Project Period: local match	\$ 2,480,000	pending
Other State \$ Being Spent During Project Period:	\$ -	uncertain
In-kind Services During Project Period: Supervision by Community Assistance Manager of Metro Greenways	\$ 20,000	
Information and Education Officer for public relations	5,000	
Past Spending: Phase 3 LCCMR	\$ 1,000,000	

Metro Conservation Corridor Partnership

Metro Greenways Manager Qualifications: Marybeth Block

Marybeth Block is the Metro Area Community Specialist for the DNR Central Region. This position administers the Metro Greenways Program and represents the program as a Metro Conservation Corridor Partner. The position supports local governments' efforts to protect and restore important parcels of land, and to adopt sound land use policies and make good decisions that support healthy landscapes and clean water. Marybeth has 25 years experience in land and water management. She began her career managing the Kandiyohi County Soil and Water Conservation District and most recently helped the Vermillion River Joint Powers Organization implement their Watershed Management Plan. From 1992 to 2003 she worked for the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources administering the Reinvest in Minnesota Reserve Program and the Comprehensive Local Water Management Act. Ms. Block has an Associate in Applied Science degree from the U of MN Waseca (landscape management emphasis) and a Bachelor of Science Degree from the U of MN College of Agriculture in Natural Resources Management and Environmental Studies.

The project manager is an employee of the Mn Department of Natural Resources, a state agency responsible for the conservation of the state's natural resources. The manager is a member of the DNR's Central Regional Operations unit, and is responsible to the regional Community Assistance Manager.