

**Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund  
2011-2012 Request for Proposals (RFP)**

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**LCCMR ID: 201-G**

**Project Title:** Springbrook Nature Center Natural Resource Management Education

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**Category:** G. Environmental Education

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**Total Project Budget:** \$ \$55,000

**Proposed Project Time Period for the Funding Requested:** 2 yrs, July 2011 - June 2013

**Other Non-State Funds:** \$ 0

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**Summary:**

Springbrook Nature Center requests funds to create educational materials, curricula, and a Natural Resource Management Plan that will educate hundreds of volunteers while accomplishing comprehensive natural resource management needs.

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**Name:** Siah St. Clair

**Sponsoring Organization:** Springbrook Nature Center

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**Web Address:** http://www.springbrooknaturecenter.org/

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**Location**

**Region:** Metro

**Ecological Section:** Minnesota and NE Iowa Morainal (222M)

**County Name:** Anoka

**City / Township:** Fridley

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|--------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------|
| _____ Funding Priorities | _____ Multiple Benefits | _____ Outcomes              | _____ Knowledge Base |
| _____ Extent of Impact   | _____ Innovation        | _____ Scientific/Tech Basis | _____ Urgency        |
| _____ Capacity Readiness | _____ Leverage          | _____ Employment            | _____ TOTAL _____%   |

## 2011-2012 MAIN PROPOSAL

### PROJECT TITLE: Springbrook Nature Center Natural Resource Management Education

#### I. PROJECT STATEMENT

Springbrook Nature Center in Fridley, MN, is requesting funds to educate hundreds of volunteers while accomplishing comprehensive natural resource management needs. Volunteers and program participants from business groups, colleges, community groups, court services, elementary, middle, and high schools currently participate in conservation activities at Springbrook. The proposed project will enhance the educational aspects of these activities, helping participants to accomplish activities more efficiently and effectively, and to gain and take away a greater understanding of natural resource conservation.

With the proposed project, Springbrook will create educational materials, curricula, and a Natural Resource Management Plan. By integrating these resources into educational activities for volunteers, Springbrook will teach volunteers diverse environmental concepts and provide an immediate opportunity to apply that new knowledge through hands-on work activities. In addition to meeting education objectives, through this project Springbrook will improve management of native and non native plant and animal species as well as invasive species, use volunteers more effectively and efficiently, leverage the completed plan to secure future support for ongoing implementation, and be a model for other centers to use. The goals of the project are:

- 1) Develop formal educational curricula for school classes in which students address graduation standard content by participating in natural resource management activities such as buckthorn removal, stream water analysis, erosion control, or wetland seed distribution.
- 2) Develop informal educational opportunities focused on learning natural resource management concepts and practices but not focused on addressing graduation standards.
- 3) Develop non-formal educational material focused on natural resource management. Participants including business employee groups, scout groups, civic organizations, court appointed "sentence to serve" community service individuals, and the general public will learn about conservation and natural resource management topics and techniques.
- 4) Develop a comprehensive Natural Resource Management Plan that integrates diverse volunteer educational experiences to implement significant portions of the plan.
- 5) Improve the efficiency and effectiveness of natural resource management at Springbrook.

The project will achieve these goals by creating educational curricula and materials, contracting with a professional to develop a Natural Resource Management Plan, developing and delivering educational opportunities, and educating volunteers to complete natural resource management activities. Volunteers will be able to see how their isolated work activity fits into an overall plan that accomplishes significant goals, and how skills they have learned can be used in their business, home, community, and other settings beyond Springbrook Nature Center.

#### II. DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT ACTIVITIES

##### **Activity 1: Develop a Natural Resource Management Plan Budget: \$5,000**

Springbrook Nature Center will execute a contract with John Moriarty to develop a comprehensive Natural Resource Management Plan. Moriarty will use the Minnesota Land Cover Classification System (MLCCS) to categorize the land cover in the Nature Center. Moriarty will also categorize management activities into those that can be conducted by volunteers and those that require professional help to implement (e.g. controlled prairie burns).

| Outcome                                       | Completion Date |
|---|-----------------|
| 1. Natural Resource Management Plan developed | Sep. 30, 2011   |

**PROJECT TITLE: Springbrook Nature Center Natural Resource Management Education**

**Activity 2: Develop and integrate education activities in the Natural Resource Management Plan Budget: \$10,000**

Springbrook Nature Center's Interpretive Program Supervisor Tara Rogness will develop curriculum components for educational opportunities to align with the Natural Resource Management Plan and will implement the plan.

| <b>Outcome</b>   | <b>Completion Date</b> |
|--|------------------------|
| 1. Natural resource management educational opportunities/curricula developed | Feb. 28, 2012          |

**Activity 3: Conduct and evaluate natural resource education activities Budget: \$31,000**

The Nature Center will hire a .2 FTE Natural Resource Educator to develop educational natural resource management programs and opportunities specific to volunteer and school groups. The Educator will also coordinate scheduling of volunteer/student groups, educate volunteers, and conduct educational natural resource management activities throughout the spring, summer, and fall seasons. Springbrook will secure a contract with a web-design professional to develop educational online activities for schools to use pre- and post-assessment opportunities for schools, and natural resource management educational information for volunteers.

| <b>Outcome</b>  | <b>Completion Date</b> |
|---|------------------------|
| 1. Natural resource education activities completed according to plan  | Jun. 30, 2013          |
| 2. Students and community members volunteer 17,730 hours in educational natural resource management activities and programs | Jun. 30, 2013          |

**III. PROJECT STRATEGY**

**A. Project Team/Partners**

- Siah St. Clair, Springbrook Nature Center Executive Director, will oversee the development, coordination, and completion of the Natural Resource Management Plan and its activities.
- Tara Rogness, Springbrook Nature Center Interpretive Program Supervisor, will plan and implement educational components of the project.
- John Moriarty, Natural Resource Management Planner, will be contracted to develop the comprehensive resource management plan.
- Springbrook Nature Center Natural Resource Educator (TBD) will schedule and conduct volunteer natural resource education activities.
- Springbrook Nature Center Web Designer/Outreach personnel (TBD) will create education and post-assessment activities for schools, individuals and volunteer community groups.

**B. Timeline Requirements**

The project runs July 1, 2011 through June 30, 2013. Natural resource management and educational planning will be completed in the first four months. Implementation of natural resource educational activities will be ongoing November 1, 2011 to June 30, 2013 and beyond.

**C. Long-Term Strategy and Future Funding Needs**

Initial investment in the Natural Resource Education/Management Plan and the momentum from its two year implementation will allow Springbrook Nature Center to leverage this plan for volunteer hours and philanthropic dollars for many years to come. Ongoing costs after the project period will include the implementation of volunteer educational activities, supplies, and some administrative expenses. With the continued support of the City of Fridley and Springbrook Nature Center Foundation, the Nature Center will secure new and additional philanthropic funds to sustain the ongoing implementation of the Plan. Springbrook's existing operating budget will sustain a minimal continuation of this plan.

## 2011-2012 Detailed Project Budget

### IV. TOTAL TRUST FUND REQUEST BUDGET 2 years

| <b>BUDGET ITEM</b>  | <b>AMOUNT</b>    |
|---|------------------|
| <b>Personnel:</b>   |                  |
| Tara Rogness, Interpretative Program Supervisor (.1 FTE) (July 1, 2011 - June 30, 2013): Springbrook Nature Center's Interpretive Program Supervisor Tara Rogness will develop curriculum components for educational opportunities to align with the Natural Resource Management Plan and will oversee implementation of the educational opportunities. (80% salary; 20% benefits, including FICA, health insurance, retirement contributions, worker's comp and unemployment insurance)  | \$ 10,000        |
| TBD, Natural Resource Educator (.3 FTE) (Oct 1, 2011 - June 30, 2013): The Natural Resource Educator will develop educational natural resource management programs and opportunities specific to volunteer and school groups. The Natural Resource Educator will also coordinate scheduling of volunteer/student groups, educate volunteers, and conduct educational natural resource management activities throughout the spring, summer, and fall seasons. (85% salary; 15% benefits, including FICA, worker's comp and unemployment insurance) | \$ 26,000        |
| <b>Contracts:</b>   |                  |
| Natural Resource Management Planning Consultant (John Moriarty): Conduct natural resource mapping of Springbrook Nature Center using MLCCR; Develop a comprehensive Natural Resource Management Plan and categorize management needs by those that can be implemented by educated volunteers and those that require professional help.  | \$ 5,000         |
| Web Designer/Outreach (TBD): Develop educational online activities for schools to use pre-visit, post-assessment opportunities for schools, and natural resource management information and links for schools, businesses, community groups, and individuals  | \$ 5,000         |
| <b>Equipment/Tools/Supplies</b>   | \$ -             |
| Educational natural resource management tools and equipment for volunteers (e.g. loppers, tree wrenches, etc.)  | \$ 4,000         |
| Informal educational natural resource management materials (i.e. pamphlets, trail signage)  | \$ 5,000         |
| <b>Acquisition (Fee Title or Permanent Easements)</b>   | \$ -             |
| <b>Travel</b>   | \$ -             |
| <b>Additional Budget Items</b>  | \$ -             |
| <b>TOTAL ENVIRONMENT &amp; NATURAL RESOURCES TRUST FUND \$ REQUEST</b>  | <b>\$ 55,000</b> |

### V. OTHER FUNDS

| <b>SOURCE OF FUNDS</b>  | <b>AMOUNT</b> | <b>Status</b> |
|---|---------------|---------------|
| <b>Other Non-State \$ Being Applied to Project During Project Period:</b>   | \$ -          | N/A           |
| <b>Other State \$ Being Applied to Project During Project Period:</b>   |               | N/A           |
| <b>In-kind Services During Project Period:</b>  |               |               |
| 17,730 volunteer hours contributed to during the project period (using the 2009 MN Dept. of Natural Resources rate for valuing volunteer time at \$20.25/hr based on the average hourly earnings of all production and nonsupervisory workers on private nonfarm payrolls in MN as determined by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics and increased by 12% to estimate fringe benefits), including:<br>- North Hennepin Community College (610 volunteers)<br>- Fridley School District (600 students)<br>- Corporate (50 volunteers)<br>- Service clubs (100 volunteers)<br>- School groups 20 classrooms of 20 students)<br>- General public (50 volunteers) | \$ 359,000    |               |
| Siah St. Clair, Executive Director (July 1, 2011 - June 30, 2013): Springbrook Nature Center Executive Director will contribute .025 FTE as project manager responsible for financial oversight   | \$ 4,000      |               |
| <b>Remaining \$ from Current ENRTF Appropriation (if applicable)</b>  | \$ -          | N/A           |
| <b>Funding History</b>  | \$ -          |               |

**Organization Description: Springbrook Nature Center**

Springbrook Nature Center's 127 acres are located in Fridley amidst a dense urban setting. The pristine preserve is home to more than 2,000 species of plants and animals. The mission of the Springbrook Nature Center is to *preserve the natural heritage, educate all visitors, and nurture the human spirit*. The vision of the Nature Center is to *create opportunities to allow all people to appreciate nature*. As part of this vision, the Nature Center is a recognized leader and innovator in environmental education for youth, adults and families. Through partnerships with school districts and community organizations, Springbrook's expert naturalists deliver hands-on environmental education and preservation programs to thousands of people each year.

**Project Manager Qualification: Siah St. Clair, Executive Director, Springbrook Nature Center**

Extensive experience in, and direct responsibility for, all aspects of nature center development, management and performance improvement. Expertise in working with the private sector as well as the public sector in promoting community commitment to environmental education, natural areas, and the lifelong interface of people and nature. Local, regional, and national professional experience.

**Career Experience and Skills**

- Personnel Recruitment, Hiring, Training, Supervision
  - Up to 30 Full Time, Part Time, and/or Seasonal staff
- Budget Development and Administration
  - Capital (Up to \$850,000) and Operating (\$500,000 annual)
- Grant Writing/Fund Raising/Fee Development and Coordination
- Volunteer Coordination, Supervision, Recognition, Training
  - 250 Plus Individuals per Year, 16,000 Plus Hours per Year
- Environmental Education/ School Curriculum/Programming
  - Writing, Updating, Teaching
  - Preschool through College
- Natural Resource Development and Management
  - Interpretive Trails, Boardwalks, Bridges, Overlooks, Structures
  - Design, Construction, Maintenance, and Management
- *Habitat Management: Prescribed Burns, Non Native Species, Wetlands*
- Wildlife Management
  - Citizen Science Monitoring, Population Reduction, Data Gathering
- Live Animal Interactive Exhibits-Design, Development, Care, Programming
- Community Event Coordination
- Creative Exhibit Design, Construction, and Maintenance
- Summer Nature Camp Curriculum Development and Camp Coordination
  - 500 Plus participants
- 501(c)(3) Non Profit Organization Management
- Public Speaking, Teaching, Interpretation
- Public Relations, Marketing, Network and Cable TV Segments

**Professional Employment Experience:**

1972-1978: Director, Wethersfield Nature Center, Town of Wethersfield, Connecticut

1978-Present: Director, Springbrook Nature Center, City of Fridley, Minnesota

**Education:**

BA, Biology, Western Michigan University

MS, Park and Recreation Resources, Michigan State University

**Certificates and Permits Held:**

- National Association for Interpretation Business Plan Training Program
- Master Instructor, Minnesota Advanced Hunter Education Program
- Instructor, Minnesota Master Naturalist Program
- U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service Bird Banding Sub Permit
- U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service Migratory Species Salvage Permit
- State of Minnesota Bird and Mammal Salvage Permit
- State of Minnesota Native Fish Exhibit Permit
- State of Minnesota Threatened Species Permit

