

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

LCCMR ID: 214-G

Project Title: Community Clean Water Stewardship Collaborative

Category: G. Environmental Education

Total Project Budget: \$ \$232,235

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

Other Non-State Funds: \$ 0

Summary:

Water stewardship will be improved through implementing a community-based approach in a pilot watershed that engages citizens, identifies barriers, and uses innovative practices and policies applicable statewide.

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Sponsoring Organization: Pelican River Watershed District

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Location

Region: Statewide

Ecological Section: North Central Glaciated Plains (251B)

County Name: Statewide

City / Township:

<input type="checkbox"/>	Funding Priorities	<input type="checkbox"/>	Multiple Benefits	<input type="checkbox"/>	Outcomes	<input type="checkbox"/>	Knowledge Base
<input type="checkbox"/>	Extent of Impact	<input type="checkbox"/>	Innovation	<input type="checkbox"/>	Scientific/Tech Basis	<input type="checkbox"/>	Urgency
<input type="checkbox"/>	Capacity Readiness	<input type="checkbox"/>	Leverage	<input type="checkbox"/>	Employment	<input type="checkbox"/>	TOTAL _____%

2011-2012 MAIN PROPOSAL

PROJECT TITLE: Community Clean Water Stewardship Collaborative.

I. PROJECT STATEMENT

Healthy lakes, rivers, and streams are part of Minnesota's identity. The water quality and habitats of our waters are at increasing risk of degradation and loss due to a variety of well documented factors, on both a statewide and local/regional basis.

In the past, the typical approach to reach stakeholders and motivate them to improve water stewardship practices has been to employ traditional information marketing techniques to educate and inform. Too often these marketing approaches have fallen short of their goals because they only get through to people who are already inclined to practice good water stewardship (i.e., we keep singing to the choir) or because they are only targeted at one set of stakeholders that influence water quality (e.g., only lakeshore owners, or only city residents, or only agricultural producers).

To produce more positive outcomes, this project will use a community-based approach to: 1) investigate and identify barriers to better water stewardship practices; 2) develop a strategic approach to improve water stewardship in three stakeholder groups (shoreland, municipal, rural/agricultural); 3) use innovative communication materials and education techniques to support the plan; 4) implement innovative activities and policies to improve water stewardship; 5) evaluate and report project results. These methods when applied strategically at the community level have been successful with respect to recycling and energy conservation programs across the nation. This established approach has provided significantly higher success rates compared to approaches based primarily on information.

This project will be conducted in the Pelican River Watershed District (PRWD). The PRWD is well suited for this project because many of the typical issues and challenges to improving water stewardship are found within its boundaries including numerous lakes and streams with extensive lakeshore development, a small city, seasonal property owners, and an active rural/agricultural element. Successful strategies from this watershed-based project will have statewide application. The project will deliver results to help achieve Habitat Recommendation 13 from the State Conservation and Preservation Plan (SCPP) and will substantially contribute to PCA's new watershed approach to civic engagement and stakeholder participation.

II. DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT ACTIVITIES

Activity 1: Strategic plan to improve water stewardship.

Budget: \$31,055

An advisory group of local and statewide interests will identify barriers and benefits of various water stewardship behaviors (via literature review, surveys, focus groups) and develop a strategic plan to implement policies and practices to improve water stewardship of shoreland residents, city residents, and rural/agricultural residents. The plan will recommend new policies and practices to improve water stewardship through different types of communication, prompts, social norms, commitment, incentives, and disincentives.

Outcome	Completion Date
1. Report barriers to implementing water stewardship practices at the shoreland, city, and rural/agricultural levels.	Sept. 2011
2. Strategic plan to improve water stewardship.	November 2011

Activity 2: Develop communication materials to support strategic plan

Budget: \$115,110

Existing communication tools will be packaged with new products to meet communication needs for various issues (e.g. aquatic invasive species, shoreline restoration, septic system

maintenance, impervious surfaces, etc). A variety of multimedia resources will be utilized or created for each topic (i.e.: audio and video PSAs, “how-to” videos, press releases, newspaper articles, online resources). To inspire individuals, resources will clearly identify an issue, explain why people should care, will motivate positive actions by providing examples of tangible actions that make a difference, and use words that communicate effectively to everyday citizens.

Outcome	Completion Date
1. Strategic communication materials for multiple audiences.	May 2012
2. Distribute materials in PRWD through multiple media sources.	June 2012

Activity 3: Improve water stewardship in pilot watershed.

Budget: \$59,850

Policies and practices to change behavior identified in Activity 1 will be implemented through a community-based approach in the pilot watershed. This work will be accomplished through a collaborative process working with local organizations, communities, citizens, state and local agencies, and other stakeholders.

Outcome	Completion Date
1. Better water stewardship by shoreland residents.	June 2013
2. Better water stewardship by city/municipal residents.	June 2013
3. Better water stewardship by rural/agricultural residents.	June 2013
4. Increased awareness of water stewardship among watershed residents.	June 2013

Activity 4: Evaluate effectiveness of implementing strategic plan

Budget: \$26,220

Water stewardship activities by each stakeholder group will be evaluated by tracking indicators established in Activity 1. Water stewardship activities and awareness levels at the community-wide level will be evaluated through pre- and post-project surveys of watershed residents.

Outcome	Completion Date
1. Pre-project water stewardship assessment report.	January 2012
2. Post-project water stewardship assessment report.	June 2013

III. PROJECT STRATEGY

A. Project Team/Partners (those funded by this project indicated in bold)

Project team: **Erika Johnson**, RMB Labs; **Henry VanOffelen**, MN Center for Env. Advocacy; Tera Guetter, Pelican River Watershed District; Kelly Blackledge, USFWS; **Student Interns**; **Consultant(s)** with expertise in project evaluation and facilitation.

Statewide organizations that have expressed prior interest and will be asked to serve on the advisory group will include representatives of USFWS, DNR, PCA, International Water Institute, Red River Basin Mgmt Board, MN Extension, and a Northern, Metro and Southern representative of SWCDs, watershed districts, lake improvement districts, Coalition of Lake Associations, lake associations, and municipalities. Local organizations with expressed interest in the pilot project: The City of Detroit Lakes, Detroit Lake Association, Becker County SWCD, Prairie Woods Chapter of the Izaak Walton League, Becker County COLA, Otter Tail County COLA, DNR, USFWS, and PCA. Individuals from these organizations are expected to contribute in-kind time and efforts.

B. Timeline Requirements

This is a 2-year project, ending June 30th, 2013.

C. Long-Term Strategy and Future Funding Needs

The PRWD is committed to continued implementation of practices and approaches identified in this project that improve water stewardship. This effort will substantially contribute to PCA’s new watershed approach to civic engagement and stakeholder participation.

2011-2012 Detailed Project Budget

IV. TOTAL TRUST FUND REQUEST BUDGET 2 years

<u>BUDGET ITEM</u>	<u>AMOUNT</u>
Personnel: Staff from the Pelican River Watershed District will oversee the project and contribute 10% of an FTE in-kind for the duration of the project. Included in Other Funds.	
Personnel: Student interns. Full time summer appointment in both project years.	16400
Contracts: Erika Johnson (RMBEL)-Project Leader will lead Actvs. 1, 2, 3 & assist with Actv. 4 by facilitating the strategic plan, developing communication materials, and implementation in the pilot watershed. 2 additional staff will assist.	\$ 154,700
Contracts: Henry VanOffelen, Nat. Resource Scientist, Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy, will assist in Activities 1-3, lead Activity 4, and write interim and final reports.	\$ 27,800
Contracts: To be determined. Survey watershed residents pre- and post-project to assess watershed stewardship awareness.	\$ 10,000
Contracts: To be determined. Fine edit and music mix of video communication products produced in Activity 2.	\$ 3,000
Equipment/Tools/Supplies: Video production equipment and editing/graphic software provided by RMBEL contractor.	NA
Acquisition (Fee Title or Permanent Easements):	NA
Travel: Mileage for personnel and contracts.	\$ 2,335
Additional Budget Items: Printing and production of media related to communication needs.	\$ 18,000
TOTAL ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES TRUST FUND \$ REQUEST	\$ 232,235

V. OTHER FUNDS

<u>SOURCE OF FUNDS</u>	<u>AMOUNT</u>	<u>Status</u>
Other Non-State \$ Being Applied to Project During Project Period	\$ -	
Other State \$ Being Applied to Project During Project Period:	\$ -	
In-kind Services During Project Period: Pelican River Watershed Staff, includes 430 miles in-kind travel	\$ 21,095	Secured
In-kind Services During Project Period: Project Advisory Committee members time to attend meetings and review communication materials and reports, includes 7,500 miles in-kind travel	\$ 62,790	Secured
Funding History:	\$ -	

ORGANIZATIONAL DESCRIPTION

The Pelican River Watershed District (PRWD) was established in 1966 by community leaders to restore and maintain the health of waters located in the watershed. The PRWD, located in northwest Minnesota, is part of Becker and Otter Tail counties and the Otter Tail watershed in the Red River of the North Basin. It covers roughly 160 square miles. The District owes its origins to the concerns and visions of a broad range of people and organizations. City, county, local representatives of state and federal governments, lake associations, lake property owners, businesses and local professionals were all part of the effort to establish the PRWD. This ethic has continued today with the addition of an Advisory Committee of representation reflecting its original inception, helping to guide its efforts as a coordinating agency. The PRWD is managed by a staff experienced in water resources planning, assessment, and management.

PROJECT MANAGER QUALIFICATIONS

Erika Johnson is the founder and Executive Director of Natural Innovations, a community-driven organization helping citizens to understand the relationship between the health of the environment and a community, and creating and strengthening collaborations among environmental organizations. Erika has been the project leader for numerous environmental grants including a 2-year MPCA grant to improve environmental education (EE) within multi-school districts by identifying barriers to non-traditional forms of EE and using existing and new resources to increase EE activities outside the classroom. She also led a community-wide environmental education strategy by facilitating a blend of multi-media communication tools around civic engagement. Erika Johnson also has extensive knowledge of multi-media as the Executive Producer for an international video production company, South Shore Productions. She has created environmentally themed videos for National Geographic, The World Bank, USAID, The Nature Conservancy and other non-profit organizations. Her first production on alternative energy in Minnesota, in collaboration with Twin Cities Public Television, featured Senator Ellen Anderson on the importance of civic engagement. Erika also works as the Education, Outreach and Communications Director for RMB Environmental Laboratories to further efforts on education and awareness creating behavior change around water quality and shore land management issues.

CONTRACTOR DESCRIPTION- RMB Environmental Laboratories

Since 1995, RMB Environmental Laboratories, Inc. has provided analytical and consulting services to the entire State of Minnesota and most recently the NE region of North Dakota. Its staff includes biologists, entomologists, chemists, environmental engineers, and administrative professionals. RMB Environmental Laboratories is recognized for: Providing analytical and consulting services to all levels of organization and government; Supporting organizations managing the majority of the watershed districts in Minnesota; Working closely with and for governmental agencies (i.e. MPCA, DNR, USFW, SWCDs, BSWR, Watershed Districts), environmental groups (i.e. Lake Associations, COLA's, Lake Improvement Districts, Red River Basin Management Board, River Watch, River Keepers, International Water Institute, Minnesota Waters), as well as all sizes of industries and municipalities; and Extensive experience working closely with citizen based monitoring programs (1,000 lakes annually) including sampler training and data management/assessment workshops, assisting over 700 organizations annually.

CONTRACTOR DESCRIPTION- Henry VanOffelen

Henry joined MCEA in June 2002 as Natural Resource Scientist. His work is focused on Red River Basin flood reduction and natural resource enhancement projects. Prior to working with MCEA he worked for the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) for 12 years, where he worked as the Red River fisheries specialist, the 1837 Treaty Biologist, a fisheries research biologist and as fisheries specialist. He has experience working with landowners and local, state and federal officials to develop comprehensive watershed management plans to enhance natural resources and reduce flood damage. He has authored eight natural resource assessments for watershed district plans and participates on several watershed project teams. He has a Master's in fisheries biology from Cornell University and a Bachelor's in fisheries from the University of Minnesota. He is a member of the Red River Basin Flood Damage Work Group's Technical and Scientific Advisory Committee.

