

**Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund
2012-2013 Request for Proposals (RFP)**

Project Title:

ENRTF ID: 123-F

Building Recreational Learning Sites in the Zumbro Watershed

Topic Area: F. Outreach/Education/Training

Total Project Budget: \$ 411,934

Proposed Project Time Period for the Funding Requested: 2.3 yrs. July 2013 - June 2016

Other Non-State Funds: \$ 0

Summary:

Encourage water protection practices by selecting, designing and building ten recreational learning sites that span the diverse Zumbro Watershed and meet environmental, educational, and recreational needs of the watershed concurrently.

Name: Lisa Eadens

Sponsoring Organization: Zumbro Watershed Partnership, Inc.

Address: 1485 Industrial Dr NW, Room 102
Rochester MN 55901

Telephone Number: (507) 226-6787

Email: admin@zumbrowatershed.org

Web Address: www.zumbrowatershed.org

Location

Region: SE

County Name: Dodge, Goodhue, Olmsted, Rice, Steele, Wabasha

City / Township:

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



Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund (ENRTF) 2012-2013 Main Proposal

PROJECT TITLE: Building Recreational Learning Sites in the Zumbro Watershed

I. PROJECT STATEMENT:

The Zumbro River in southeastern Minnesota is unique in its diversity of landscape, areas of great environmental sensitivity, and susceptibility to flooding. To help reduce and prevent future pollution and flooding events, we need citizens to connect with our river resource, understand its importance, and implement water protection practices appropriate to different landscapes across the watershed. Currently the Zumbro Watershed lacks both sufficient access to the river and sites that educate about clean water.

This project will select ten existing public locations, such as parks, school grounds, scientific and natural areas, and flood buyout property, and enhance their value by adding new recreational and educational infrastructure. The enhanced sites will provide improved river access **and** promote learning about water protection practices, flood prevention, and the control of invasive aquatic species while people enjoy fishing, boating, picnicking, etc. The project's goal is to have ten accessible, visible public sites that:

- Promote clean water initiatives;
- Increase the Zumbro River's visibility as an environmental, educational, and recreational asset;
- Address environmental, educational, and recreational needs at the same time through site selection, design, and construction; and
- Enhance the Zumbro River State Water Trail by increasing the region's understanding of the river's value to the region, improving the trail's visibility, enhancing the trail's environmental and recreational assets, and increasing its recreational use.

From the headwaters of the Zumbro to its confluence with the Mississippi River, the network of ten sites will tell the watershed's environmental story, promote water stewardship through awareness of appropriate, effective clean-water practices, and encourage recreational use. The sites will be chosen in high traffic areas for easy access to the general public, public officials, fishermen along the river's banks, boaters paddling the river's state water trail, and educational groups on field trips.

II. DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT ACTIVITIES

Activity 1: Select Sites

Budget: \$27,432

Initial Screening: We will identify potential sites on existing public lands that illustrate our diverse landscape, environmental challenges, and appropriate water protection practices including:

- Restored wetlands that provide ecological services
- Rural and urban soil and water conservation practices, such as grassland buffers
- Managed woodlands and pastures that promote infiltration
- Groundwater protection practices for fractured limestone (karst) geology
- Restored trout streams that provide improved habitat and public access
- Floodplains with significance for stream habitat and water quality

(see map for potential locations of the above sites)

Evaluation: A key component of this project will be engaging local communities in the process of identifying and planning the sites so that they embrace long-term ownership of the site in their community. We will host at least two public meetings in the watershed to receive comments on the proposed sites. Sites will then be evaluated based on the following criteria:

- *Watershed Significance:* Sites that address the goals and strategies identified in the Zumbro Watershed Management Plan and *Zumbro River Watershed Restoration Prioritization* project (M.L. 2011. First Special Session, Chp. 2, Art.3, Sec. 2, Subd. 05d). At least one site will be chosen that demonstrates a water protection practice that stores or filters water to prevent runoff and erosion.
- *Ecological Significance:* Sites that reflect diverse environments and ecological challenges.
- *Educational Significance:* Sites that have opportunities to illustrate different water protection strategies and ease of access by the general public and educational groups.
- *Recreational Significance:* Sites that have the ability to provide enhancements to fishing and boating on the Zumbro River State Water Trail and other riverside recreational activities.

- *Community Support:* Sites that have support from local government, landowners, and businesses as well as schools, conservation groups, and others that would use the site as an outdoor classroom.

| Outcomes | Completion Date |
|---|------------------------|
| Identification of potential sites for evaluation | April 2014 |
| Analysis of public responses to the potential sites | June 2014 |
| Evaluation of the potential sites | June 2014 |
| Ten sites selected for design and building | June 2014 |

Activity 2: Design Sites

Budget: \$122,064

After site selection, design of appropriate infrastructure will be completed for each site. Recreational infrastructure such as new or enhanced parks, trails, trailheads, canoe launches and fishing piers will be combined with educational infrastructure such as permanent signs and kiosks that interpret the significance of the site for water protection. Community meetings will solicit input on the site design.

| Outcome | Completion Date |
|---|------------------------|
| Ten sites designed (\$11k per site for design of recreation and education infrastructure plus mileage for site visits, engagement of local communities, and project management) | December 2014 |

Activity 3: Build Sites, Create and Disseminate Maps

Budget: \$262,438

Sites will be built according to their design by the Conservation Corps of Minnesota and/or community groups and opened to the public. Printed and digital maps unique to each site and which connect that site and its significance to the greater network of sites across the watershed will be distributed to each site and across the watershed via partner websites and in hard copy to appropriate government agencies, educational, community, and recreational institutions.

| Outcome | Completion Date |
|--|------------------------|
| Ten sites built (\$20k per site for labor and materials plus mileage, construction observation, engagement of local communities, and project management) | October 2015 |
| Maps for public use (\$9k for development of 10 site maps, a watershed-wide map, printing and distribution of 1,000 copies of each map) | October 2015 |

III. PROJECT STRATEGY

A. Project Team/Partners

Partners receiving ENRTF money:

- **UM Center for Changing Landscapes** Mary Vogel, Co-Director and staff: site selection, site and map design, construction observation
- **Conservation Corp of Minnesota** Youth corps volunteers and young adult corps: coordination and construction of infrastructure

Partners receiving ENRTF money and providing in-kind:

- **Zumbro Watershed Partnership, Inc.** Lisa Eadens, Watershed Coordinator & Kevin Strauss, Education Coordinator: project coordination, site selection, community outreach, education planning, dissemination of map
- **UM Soil, Water, & Climate** Dr. David Mulla (in-kind) and graduate students (paid): ecological evaluation of sites
- **UM Extension** Doug Malchow, Educator: site selection, education planning (mileage only paid)
- **UM SE Regional Partnership** Erin Meier, Executive Director: site selection, community outreach (mileage only paid)

Partners not receiving ENRTF money: DNR Craig Blommer: site selection, design consultation

B. Timeline Requirements: The time allotted reflects two building seasons after selection and design.

C. Long-Term Strategy and Future Funding Needs: The Zumbro Watershed Partnership, UM Extension and other educational efforts will use the map and ten sites as outdoor classrooms to promote water quality stewardship in the watershed. Although no additional sites are anticipated at this time, telling the watershed story may be enhanced by additional sites in the future.

2012-2013 Detailed Project Budget

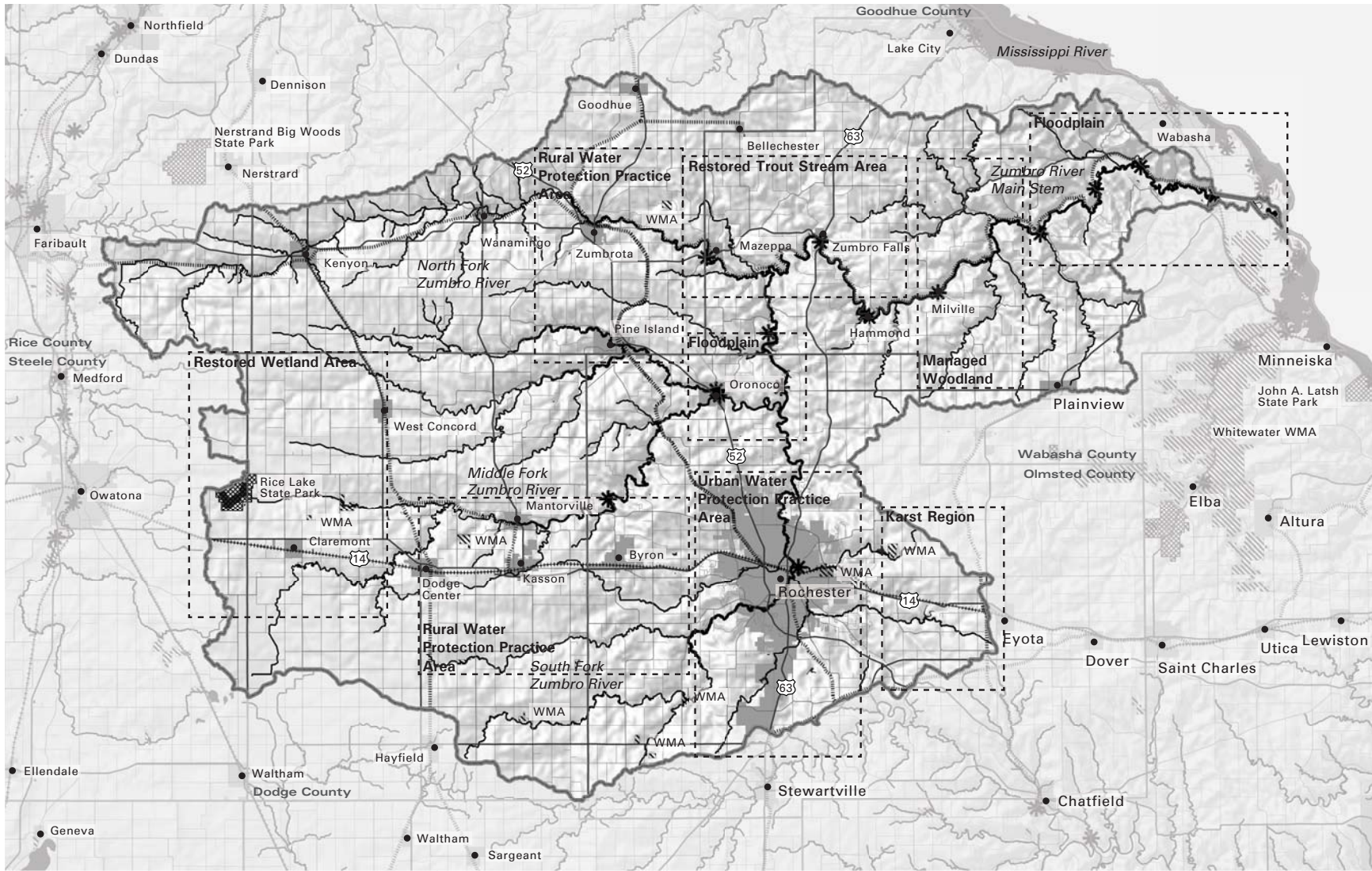
IV. TOTAL ENRTF REQUEST BUDGET 2.3 years


| BUDGET ITEM | AMOUNT |
|---|-------------------|
| Personnel: | \$ - |
| Zumbro Watershed Partnership Coordinator - Project coordination and facilitation, .15 FTE 92% Salary 8% benefits for 2.3 years | \$ 22,240 |
| Zumbro Watershed Partnership Education Coordinator - Community outreach, site selection and education planning, .2 FTE 92% Salary 8% Benefits for 2.3 years | \$ 24,710 |
| University of Minnesota Center for Changing Landscapes Co-Director - Team leader for design, construction plans and construction observation for 10 sites, 1000 hours @ \$54.42/hr (\$50.86 salary; \$3.56 benefits) | \$ 54,420 |
| University of Minnesota Center for Changing Landscapes Research/Outreach Staff - Design and construction plans and construction observation, 2229 hours @ \$38.08/hr (\$28.00 salary; \$10.08 benefits) | \$ 84,880 |
| Contracts: | \$ - |
| Conservation Corps of Minnesota - Site construction 3,125 hours @ \$16/hr for youth corps volunteers; 2,272 hours @ \$22/hr for young adult corps | \$ 99,984 |
| University of Minnesota Soil, Water & Climate - Graduate student assistance in ecological evaluation of sites 200 hours @ \$25/hr (\$20.37 salary; \$4.63 benefits) | \$ 5,000 |
| Equipment/Tools/Supplies: | \$ - |
| Construction materials such as rock, vegetation, wood, signage (\$10k per site) | \$ 100,000 |
| Printing (design drawings, maps for public meetings and instructional drawings for construction crews; 1,000 copies of each site map and the watershed-wide map; large maps and other public meeting materials) | \$ 9,000 |
| Travel: | \$ - |
| Mileage - \$6,000 for ZWP, UM Extension and UM SE Regional Development Partnership staff (~60 miles per site x .55/mile x 5 community meetings per site x 10 sites plus \$350 for site selection and project management meetings each); \$5,700 for UM Center for Changing Landscapes (~190 miles per site visit @ .55/mile x 5 trips per site x 10 sites plus 5 additional meetings for construction design and observation) | \$ 11,700 |
| TOTAL ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES TRUST FUND \$ REQUEST = | \$ 411,934 |

V. OTHER FUNDS


| SOURCE OF FUNDS | AMOUNT | Status |
|---|------------|----------------|
| In-kind Services During Project Period: | \$ 44,019 | |
| University of Minnesota Southeast Regional Sustainable Development Partnership: staff and board time for site selection, community outreach (\$10,000) | | |
| University of Minnesota Extension: staff time for site selection, community outreach, education planning and implementation, educational field days (\$20,000) | | |
| Zumbro Watershed Partnership: staff and board time for education implementation and public events (\$9,000) | | |
| Department of Natural Resources: staff time for site selection and design consultation where appropriate (\$3,000) | | |
| University of Minnesota Soil, Water and Climate: Dr. David Mulla's assistance with ecological evaluation of sites, .01 FTE (\$2,019 = \$1,485 salary; \$534 benefits) | | |
| Remaining \$ from Current ENRTF Appropriation (if applicable): \$150,000 in 2011 for Zumbro River Watershed Restoration Prioritization project (M.L. 2011. First Special Session, Chp. 2, Art.3, Sec. 2, Subd. 05d) | \$ 149,000 | <i>Unspent</i> |
| Funding History: Funding is being sought from the SE Regional Sustainable Development Partnership Experiment in Rural Cooperation for a prototype recreational learning site in the Zumbro to be selected/designed prior to the beginning of this project. | \$ 15,000 | |

Building Recreation Learning Sites in the Zumbro Watershed





CENTER FOR CHANGING LANDSCAPES
COLLEGE OF DESIGN
Department of Forest Resources
College of Food, Agricultural and Natural Resource Sciences
UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA



Zumbro River Watershed

| | | | |
|--|-------------------------------|--|--------------------|
| | State Park, Rec Area, Wayside | | Active Railroad |
| | (20) DNR WMA | | Abandoned Railroad |
| | (4) DNR SNA | | State Water Trail |
| | Municipality | | Elevation High |
| | Water | | Elevation Low |
| | Public Water Access | | 0 1 2 3 5 miles |

The Zumbro Watershed encompasses more than 900,000 acres of agricultural and urban lands that drain into the three forks of the Zumbro River before joining the Mississippi River at Kellogg, MN. The watershed contains more than 288 miles of rivers and streams, including 57 miles of high-quality trout streams, a smallmouth bass fishery, and portions of the state water trail. The watershed covers parts of six counties—Dodge, Goodhue, Rice, Olmsted, Steele, and Wabasha—and 22 municipalities, including the growing City of Rochester.

PROJECT MANAGER QUALIFICATIONS & ORGANIZATION DESCRIPTION

Project Title: Building Recreational Learning Sites in the Zumbro Watershed

Project Manager Qualifications

The project manager for the “Building Recreational Learning Sites in the Zumbro Watershed” proposal will be Lisa Eadens, Watershed Coordinator for the Zumbro Watershed Partnership (ZWP). Lisa holds a Bachelor of Science in Biology from Davidson College in North Carolina and a Master of Science in Wildlife Ecology and Conservation from the University of Florida. Lisa has worked for the ZWP since September of 2009, administratively supporting the Board, coordinating member and partner activities, and applying for and administering grants. Lisa has administered numerous grants for the ZWP, including \$25,000 and \$76,000 Surface Water Assessment Grants from the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA), two McKnight Foundation grants totaling \$130,000, and a \$140,000 contract with the MPCA to write the Zumbro turbidity Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) implementation plan and update the Zumbro River Watershed Management Plan. Lisa is also the Project Manager on the current ENRTF project, *Zumbro River Watershed Restoration Prioritization* (M.L. 2011. First Special Session, Chp. 2, Art.3, Sec. 2, Subd. 05d. Lisa’s experience administering grants includes managing budgets, compiling reports, and facilitating partner and community meetings.

Description of Organization

Zumbro Watershed Partnership, Inc is a 501 (c)(3) organization created to serve as a catalyst for interaction between watershed citizens and natural resource professionals. The ZWP is a member driven organization, working across jurisdictional boundaries to achieve the goal of protecting and restoring the natural resources and social benefits of a healthy watershed. The mission of the ZWP is “To promote the protection and improvement of the Zumbro River Watershed.”

The ZWP Board of Directors is composed of 25 members. Each of the six counties in the watershed is represented by an appointed county commissioner and a soil and water conservation district supervisor; the remaining 13 positions are held by citizen directors elected for three-year terms. Currently, the ZWP employs three part-time staff.

In 2007, ZWP prepared the first comprehensive watershed management plan for the 910,337-acre Zumbro River Watershed, which serves as the framework for prioritizing projects and seeking grants. ZWP’s funding currently comes from a combination of membership dues, business donations, and state and foundational grants for specific projects.